

THE TEXAN REFUGEE



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THRILLING STORY OF FIELD AND CAMP LIFE

DURING

THE LATE CIVIL WAR.

Dixon, Samuel H.

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W. H. HARRISON, JR.,
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PREFACE.

THE recent war between the States gave rise to many courageous deeds, and furnished the historian, the poet, and the novelist with the noblest themes that can inspire the pen of any writer. Nor was it the battle-field alone that brought into play the highest qualities of manhood; some of the most signal instances of patriotic self-devotion and heroic endurance were enacted at home—in every town and hamlet throughout the land. The purpose of the present story, which is founded upon actual facts, is to present to the reader a picture of events occurring during the late Civil War, in which the strong points and striking features of Southern life and character in camp and field, as also the home circle, are faithfully portrayed; and with a view of preventing the stirring scenes of that momentous period of our national existence from passing out of the memory of the present generation, their narration in a highly attractive and entertaining style is now offered to the public.

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CHAPTER I.

THE LONE STAR STATE.

THE mass of our countrymen know as little about Texas as they do about Tartary. Indeed, their ideas of both places are somewhat alike. As Texas is yet destined, by its soil and productions, to be the Italy of America, it will not be considered foreign to give a short sketch of this favored land as a proper introduction to the story of one of her sons.

Few countries present such a variety of climate, surface, and soil as Texas. It abounds in rugged mountains and sea-like prairies, in dense forests and open plains, in fertile fields and arid deserts. On its northern front the clear streams are frozen in the winter season, and the maple, walnut, and beech grow on their banks, while mountain trout in myriads animate the waters. The same streams, flowing south to the gulf for hundreds of miles, become sluggish, muddy rivers, reflecting the live oak, the pecan and wild orange, linked by the amorous mustang vines into a tangled mass of tropical glory on their banks, while the gar-fish and alligator glide through the sleepy waters. The vegetable and mineral productions of Texas vary with the face of the country.

The hills of the central north are rich in gold-bearing quartz. Vast veins of almost pure iron are found in this region, and quarries of white marble rival the famous productions of Italy, while coal in abundance crops out from the ground.

Going south to within one hundred miles of the gulf, the ores are lost, nor is the smallest pebble met, to break the level expanse of deep, rich loam which stretches away, far as the eye can reach, into boundless prairies. Here and there on the sea-like surface clusters of timber, like islands, rise, and in the peculiar mirage that in the summer time is ever changing the distant forms, the groves seem mirrored in the grassy ocean. Thousands of large-horned cattle revel in the rich, green pastures. Flocks of wild geese fill the air with their shrill cries, and herds of red deer sport through the meadows of Indian pinks, Texas stars, and flowering cactus, which in the spring time convert the prairie into a vast, variegated carpet of ever-changing hues as it rises and falls in billowy undulations before the soft south wind.

In this *cosmos* the apple and peach, with the hardy cereals of the north, yield bountiful harvests, while, down by the gulf, the orange, the pomegranate and fig inclose fields of corn, cotton and sugar. This diversity of climate, soil, and productions is only exceeded by the difference in the classes that inhabit Texas. At one time it was the rendezvous for the outcasts of every land; the debtor and the desperado, the robber and murderer, from west of the Rio Grande and east of the Mississippi, found in its dense forests and uninhabited plains a perfect asylum. Those at

all inclined to industry had an inducement to settle down, from the ease with which they could live, where the prairies teemed with cattle and the soil was so productive of harvests.

After Texas had become one of the family of States, a different class of people emigrated thence. Mechanics from the northern States and planters from the South, sturdy, blue-eyed Germans from the Rhine, and sallow-faced, volatile Gauls from Acadia, formed committees to put down crime, or banded together to brand their herds in the spring and fall. Still the morals of the Texans, as a people, never stood very high. The wild, free life of the ranger, and the sparsely-settled territory through which he roamed, made him the judge of the offense as well as the executioner of the penalty. He would grasp as that of a brother the hand red with the blood of a companion stabbed in some drunken fray, while he would hang without remorse the wretch who stole a horse as a being too degraded to live, though the prairies teemed with mustangs valued at the trouble of catching.

There were exceptions to this rule to be found in many settlements throughout the State—places where right was adhered to for the sake of right; where white-spired churches could be seen peeping from green groves, and where, on Sabbath days, songs of praise could be heard ascending to Him who had created this beautiful land.

Such a settlement was Gonzelletta, on the San Bernard River, a few hours' ride from the point where it empties into the Gulf of Mexico. At one time Gonzelletta was a flourishing village, with a mixed Span-

ish and American population, but, after the battle of San Jacinto, the Mexicans burned the place in their retreat, and, although it was never rebuilt, the settlement on the edge of the prairie still retains the name of the town. To those accustomed to a rolling country this place would at first appear monotonous, but the clear skies, the bracing air, the sweeping plains, and the dark, rich verdure soon compensate for hill, cliff, and cataract in the more sterile north. Gonzelletta, with its half score rich plantations, its handsome dwellings, embowered in groves of magnolia, and surrounded by masses of tropical flowers, and the village-like clusters of negro cabins under the edge of the woods, formed a picture of beauty and peace that never wearied the eye.

At the date of our narrative—February, 1861—the two principal plantations in the place were owned by Robert Warren, senior, and Mrs. Boardman, a widow lady who had settled in Gonzelletta with her husband in '52. Mr. Boardman was an invalid, and left Tennessee for Texas by the advice of his physicians, but death sought out his mark as quickly as if it had not been moved, and Mr. Boardman died within two years. He left his large estate to his widow and an only child, Amy, who, at the time named as the commencement of our story, was in her eighteenth year.

As this is not a novel, the writer cannot in truth draw a picture of improbable angel beauty, for Amy was simply a modest-looking, brown-haired girl, with nothing in her appearance to attract a second glance from a casual observer. She was educated at home by a New England lady who had accompanied the

family from Tennessee. This lady subsequently married a lawyer from Brazoria, named Gasting. Though refined, Amy was not accomplished, as the world calls it. She could draw and play a little, and when her heart was full of the beauty around her, she could pour out her feelings in songs for which words were never written and music never set.

It was the evening before the secession of Texas from the Union, and in the glory of a tropical sky the red sun was sinking behind the woods, canopied by masses of golden and opal clouds that flooded the landscape with varied colors, like the light streaming down from the stained windows of some mighty cathedral. The soft, lulling breeze from the gulf went sighing through the magnolias, scattering the rich incense around, and the plantation bells broke the stillness as they called the negroes from their labor in the fields. Amy, with her mother, a fine, matronly-looking lady of forty-five years, was sitting on the wide gallery so peculiar to southern houses. Both mother and daughter looked pale and depressed, and at times the eyes of the girl were turned eagerly toward the long, straight road across the prairie.

“Mother,” said Amy, breaking the long silence, “I feel sick at heart, and a dread that I cannot give cause for makes me shiver.”

“I feel as do you, my child,” said Mrs. Boardman, moving her chair close to that of her daughter and taking one of the small white hands in hers; “I feel as you do, but I can assign no reason for it. To-morrow the vote of Texas will be cast for secession, and only God knows what will follow. Now, more than

ever, do I miss your father, for I know how he would vote were he living."

"Why, mother, I cannot see the necessity for breaking up the country. I am sure the Yankees have not injured us; indeed, I quite like the northern people whom we met in our travels. Why, then, should they desire to break up the country, of which since my childhood I have been so proud, and everybody else should be?"

"I do not know, Amy," was the reply. "The people are surely crazed, for every man, woman, and child whom I know are crying for secession, and your old teacher from New England, Mrs. Gasting, is louder in her denunciations of the Yankees than any person I am acquainted with."

The usually calm face of the girl glowed as she said, "Mother, all will not vote for secession; I would not if I were a man. There is one who is braver and stronger and cooler than are the men in Brazoria, and to-morrow Robert will teach them to do right."

"Men will not be guided by ideas of right, my child. The bowie-knife and revolver will guide the ballot, and Robert would be reckless, in the face of the Knights of the Golden Circle, to oppose them. Better he should stay away, for I do not think to-morrow will see the end. His single vote would avail nothing, and his death would cause a world of harm."

"Death! Would they kill him, mother, for being a man? Oh, I will not let him go; I cannot lose him. But if I were a man I would vote, in spite of Wharton and every man on the Brazos!"

"I feel as you do, my daughter," said Mrs. Board-

man, sitting straight in her chair and clasping her hands before her. "But if there be any truth in the papers and letters I receive from the North, the bayonets of the Union will be used against the ballots of secession. Let Robert reserve himself for that."

She had scarcely concluded her sentence when two mounted men came galloping up the avenue of live oaks leading to the house. They rode small, wiry mustangs, accoutered in the regular Mexican style, and sat their horses with that easy grace which can only be acquired by a life in the saddle. Riding close to the house, both men dismounted, and they were certainly fine specimens of their respective races. The one was a pure Caucasian, about twenty-five years of age, standing nearly six feet in height, and with that ease of carriage which denotes great strength and powers of endurance. His hair was straight and black, his bronzed face strong and expressive rather than handsome, while his warm, grey eyes seemed full of that strange light which a shade would turn to dancing smiles or burning anger. The other was a negro, who, on dismounting, took the bridle from his master, and as he stood with a hand on the reins of both horses he could pass for a statue of Hercules cut in ebony. He was over thirty, and taller than his master; but being heavier, the difference would seem at first the other way. His skin was jet black, and his features full, yet well-proportioned. As he took off his hat to salute the ladies, his thick, woolly hair could be seen curling around a head that would prove a study to the phrenologist, for, while the forehead was broad and prominent, the rest of the head looked like a black globe.

As the young white man bounded up the steps he was met by Mrs. Boardman and her daughter with a warmth that showed more than ordinary interest. Throwing off his broad-brimmed sombrero, he arranged seats for the ladies, and, taking one for himself, an expression of pain came into his face, as, after the customary greeting, he said:

“I have been all along the bottom—at Bell’s, Townsend’s, Underwood’s, and at a score of other places—and I find but few men who are not going to vote for secession to-morrow. The majority, I think, are opposed to it, but the fear of Wharton and his clique deters them.”

“Is it true, Robert,” asked Amy, “that they are going to kill those who do not vote for secession to-morrow?”

“I do not know; there will certainly be trouble. I saw a card on the court-house in Brazoria, stating that those who vote for Yankee rule must do it in the face of southern steel. I suppose by ‘Yankee rule’ is meant in favor of the Union.”

“Then all will vote for secession,” said Amy. “Oh! if I were a man!”

“If you were, Amy,” was his reply, “what could your single arm do? You could resist by a vote, and, God giving me strength, I intend to do that.”

“Be careful, Robert,” said Mrs. Boardman, gazing at the young man with a look of pride. “Remember, more will be required of you, or I am mistaken, than mere voting.”

“I know it, Mrs. Boardman; and if Texas leaves the Union, I am determined to leave for the first rendezvous of Union men, and, if necessary, fight,

for I am convinced war will follow this mad course of the slave States."

"Did you see Henderson Townsend to-day?" asked Amy. Being answered in the negative, she continued: "He was here and poured out a torrent of angry words against the Yankees. I reminded him that both he and his father were born and lived in Connecticut till a few years since. He said that did not make him an abolitionist, and then started off muttering vengeance against those who vote for Union to-morrow."

Robert Warren's face was clouded for an instant as he said, "Poor fool, he is true to his instincts." Then, changing his tone, he continued: "It is very strange, but there is not one person of northern birth in this section who is a slave-owner that is not going to vote for secession to-morrow."

"But there is one southern man," said Amy, with flashing eyes, "and he is a South Carolinian by birth, who hates their actions, and who will oppose them! Oh, Robert, I do, I do feel proud of you!"

When strong emotions move the heart, or great dangers surround us, cold etiquette is laid aside, and we stand face to face, with no feelings disguised. No one could look on the animated face of the young girl, as her eyes were turned on Robert Warren, without feeling that a deep, pure love for the young patriot stirred her heart. But there is a love higher than that which connects the sexes; a love which forgets all personal considerations when principles are involved; a love which causes the maiden to part with the adored without a pang of regret; a love which impels the mother to kiss her first-born adieu

and send him into the ranks of death; a love which exchanges wealth and ease and luxury for poverty, hardships, and toil; a love which elevates man to the dignity of the angels, for it mocks at danger and smiles at death. It is the soul-absorbing love of our fatherland and our country's flag, and such in all its intensity was the feeling that stirred the heart of Amy Boardman.

After a few more words, Robert Warren rose to go, promising to return on the following evening and report affairs at Brazoria. Then, with tender entreaties from Amy, and kind messages to his family from Mrs. Boardman, he and his servant sprang on their horses and were soon galloping over the small arm of prairie which separated Mrs. Boardman's from his father's plantation.

Archy, for such was the black man's name, broke silence as he slackened the pace of his horse.

"Mauss Robut, is yeh gwine to de vil'ge to-morrow, shuah?"

"Why do you ask, Archy?"

"Coz, if yeh is, sah, I'd like to go, mighty."

"But why to-morrow any more than any other day?"

"Wall, Mauss Robut, I dunno. 'Pears tings ain't agoin' right, nohow. Hen Townsend, he's agoin' to be dar, an' he don't like yeh much, I reckon, coz of Miss Amy, an' he tole Watts, his boy, he'd make yeh squirm yet. An' den, Mauss Robut, dare's Whartor, him and Hen goes togedder, an' dey's agoin' to shoot all wat don't go wid dem."

Having said this, Archy looked earnestly into his master's face, as if to see the effect of his statements

"But, supposing all this to be true, and they were

going to shoot me, Archy, what good could you do?"

The eyes of the black man widened till the whites were visible around them, and, straightening himself up in the stirrups, he said :

"Mauss Robut, yeh knows I ain't skeery; yeh knows I kin shoot, an' den, Mauss Robut, if dey kills yeh, I don't want to lib nohow. Dey kin shoot me fust. Do let me go, mauss," and the last words were uttered in the most appealing tones.

"I will see about it in the morning, Archy," said his master as he threw him the bridle rein and strode hastily into the house, which by this time they had reached.

CHAPTER II.

AT THE POLLS.

Brazoria is very pleasantly situated on the Brazos River, and had in 1861 about one thousand inhabitants. Around it is the largest sugar and cotton portion of the State, and consequently it had the largest slave population.

Early on the morning of February 23, 1861, scores of stalwart horsemen, armed to the teeth, could be seen moving in on the different roads, and dismounting to fasten their horses to the racks around the white frame court-house, in the center of the town. Each rider carried a heavy whip or "quirt," in addition to his ponderous, jingling spurs. About the principal tavern the men crowded, where liquor was provided in abundance by some of the wealthy men of the town. It was noticeable to see the groups of anxious-looking faces, the majority in the prime of life, and it was rare to see one whose form did not denote great strength and activity. The dress was more uniform than is ever seen outside of regularly-dressed organizations. Long boots with the pants inside, belts with pistols and knife protruding beyond the short-cut jackets, shirts open at the neck, with

loose sailor ties, and stiff Mexican sombreros, or broad-brimmed, slouched felt hats, turned up with a defiant air in front, was the usual costume. With few exceptions, their faces were heavily bearded, and the hair worn in long masses down to the shoulders. There was but little intelligence in the group of animal faces. They were indicative of strong machines, that would move with effect if the power were applied, and furnished. They could follow, not lead, and to such men the words of those they followed were oracular.

As each emerged from the room, rough jokes and loud laughter greeted him, or the oft-repeated query, "Say, what'll yeh take fer yer hoss? I'm goin' to raise a cavalry company to fight the d—d abolitionists?"

Often the new-comer would be greeted with the question, "Say, how are you going to vote to-day?" and invariably the reply came back and was greeted with wild cheers, "For secession," or "Against the infernal Yankees!"

One of these last arrivals was a young man who might pass for any age between twenty-five and fifty. He was long, and cadaverous-looking, with thin, reddish beard and watery blue eyes. Fastening his horse, he entered the bar-room, and, sitting on the counter so as to face the crowd, he appeared to slide into himself like a telescope, the bent, thick body presenting a queer contrast to the long, thin legs. Turning to the hard-worked bar-tender, he asked for a glass of whisky, which, being provided, he held out at arm's length, and in a cracked and somewhat nasal tone said:

“Fels, I’ve a toast to propose, and cuss him what don’t drink it!”

“Let’s have it, Hen!” “Hurrah!” “Go in, ole boy!” were the greetings that met his announcement.

“Here’s success to secession, an’ a bullet for every feller that casts a ballot agin’ it.”

A loud cheer went up from the crowd, and a swarthy giant, who drank the toast in a tumbler of raw whisky, wiped his lips with his coat-sleeve, and, striking the man addressed as “Hen” on the shoulder with his open hand, he shouted out, “I’d like ter see the chap what objects to them ’ere sentiments.”

“Well, then,” said Henderson Townsend, who by this time had stepped to the door, “if yeh look down the street ye’ll see one. There comes Bob Warren, and I’ll bet a thousand dollars to a quirt that he votes agin’ us. Why, he’s gone plumb over to the abolitionists.”

A hoarse din of threats followed this announcement, but it gradually sank into a murmur as the object of Townsend’s remark drew near, and into silence as he dismounted before the tavern and fastened his horse to the commodious rack.

“Come in an’ drink, Warren,” said Townsend, “come in’ an drink; Wharton’s stood a big treat to-day.”

“I thank you, sir,” said Warren, “but I do not wish to drink.”

“What, not drink success to our cause?”

“I do not know you or your cause, sir,” said Warren as he passed into the building. Going up stairs, he knocked at a door with a peculiar rap, and was admitted into a room where five men were sitting

around a small table. Their faces had a troubled look, but there was an intelligence and determination stamped on each, in striking contrast with the crowd of fierce faces outside.

“Mr. Williams, I am glad to see you and the rest of our friends here,” said Robert Warren, as he took a chair. “If I mistake not, there is dangerous duty before us to-day.”

“True, Mr. Warren,” said the gentleman addressed as Williams, “but we must undertake it like men. Wharton’s party, I understand, intend surrounding the polls, and they swear to shoot every man voting against secession. We cannot resist them by force, but by a calm and determined demand for the right of voting as we choose, I think we can succeed. This threat will deter many from voting with us who I am certain are opposed to disunion. Let us hope that seeing our course they may take courage and rally around us.”

Agreeing to return to the room again before voting, the little party descended and mingled with the crowd.

About nine o’clock a tall, middle-aged man, with light hair, and full, reddish beard, rode up to the tavern, accompanied by a servant. He was greeted with loud cheers, which he acknowledged by removing his hat and bowing. There could be seen the broad, white forehead, and deep blue eyes, which, in connection with his straight nose and thin, firm lips, bespoke the man of power. On dismounting he was surrounded by the crowd, each anxious to grasp his hand, and he blended with them without being one of them. His name will live as that of an able, brave, misguided man, John Wharton, leader of the

Texas Rangers in the war against his country.

After conversing with a group of the more intelligent men for some time, it was decided before opening the polls to hold a meeting in the courthouse, over which the Stars and Stripes were then floating. This intention was announced, and the building was soon packed to its utmost capacity, and scores of faces peered in through the windows and doors. Wharton, amid great applause, was conducted to the judge's chair, before which as a lawyer he had often pleaded. After the formality of electing proper officers to conduct the meeting, "Colonel" Wharton was introduced, and advanced to the desk with apparent embarrassment.

"Fellow Texans," he began, "we have assembled in Brazoria to-day to decide, so far as we are concerned, one of the most important questions ever submitted to any people—that of being an independent South, or a servile collection, of States, 'neath the crushing heel of a despot. When we threw off the yoke of Mexico we were glad and proud, after a short period of national independence, to link our fate with what was then the great United States—great no longer in the esteem of free men. Once this land was governed by true patriots, who had the interest of the whole country at heart; now the power is wrested from their keeping, and in their places stand not our rulers, but tyrants—men who would rob us of our property, free our slaves, and place them on an equality with us, with you, my countrymen! Yes, and urge this evil on till the negroes who now work in our fields become aspirants for the hands of our sisters and our daughters! Are you willing that this thing

should be? Will you lie passive while the chains are being forged to enslave you? And will you still cling close like cowards to what is not the government of your choice?"

"No! no!" "Never! never?" rang through the building, and faces began to flush, while the eyes of the excited mob glared like those of wild beasts.

"I rejoice to hear you say 'No!'" he continued, "but where can we find a remedy for this evil which threatens us? It is not to be purchased from our abolition rulers. We cannot become exiles and seek freedom in other lands. We hold the power in our own hands, and woe be to us if we use it not. By this I do not mean that we are to go out to battle, for if Texas acts as she should to-day, there will be no foe to battle with. Already five of our sister States have gone out, and from their happy eminence beckon us to follow.

"Are you ready, are you willing to go?" "We are, we are!" came in thundering response. "Then if you are, let your votes corroborate your words, and should the cowardly negro-stealers of the North retard our efforts in going out, or our peace in remaining out of such a Union, so help me God, I will be one of a hundred thousand Texan rangers to spring to the rescue of the 'Lone Star' State! With fire and sword we will sweep down on the homes of the fanatical Puritans and wring from their black hearts retribution for our many wrongs and indignities. But I fear no war. Mark my words, we will depart in peace. Every slave State will follow us, and we will build us up a model nation, where the white and the black man will be protected, and each occupy the position God

intended him for. A nation that can and will carry out the principles for which our forefathers bled, a nation that all can love, and whose emblem I now show you—”

Saying this, he unfurled a rich flag with three parallel bars, red, white and red, and on the blue square of the upper left, the “lone star” of Texas. Cheer after cheer greeted this emblem of a shadowy nationality.

“If,” said Wharton, raising his voice to its highest pitch, “this flag is your choice, haul down from above your head, where now it floats, the flaunting banner of infamy, and give the banner of liberty and a united South to the winds of Texas!”

The climax was reached. Through the open windows and doors the maddened mob pounced out, and two of the most active were quickly on the roof pulling down the flag. As soon as it reached their grasp it was torn from the halliards and thrown to the crowd beneath. While the “stars and bars” were being hoisted, the Stars and Stripes were torn to shreds with drunken rage and trampled in the dust.

A group of anxious-looking men, at a distance watched this scene. Not a word was spoken, nor did any of the number stir, till “Colonel” Wharton shouted out, “To the polls!” and the crowd surged toward the tavern. After all had gone, Robert Warren advanced, and, gathering the tattered remnants of the flag, hurriedly placed them in his breast, and then with his friends returned to the room in the tavern, which they had left to attend the meeting. After closing the door, Mr. Williams, with a pale face and in smothered accents, began:

“Friends, we should have expected this. The mob is perfectly frantic. We are here and cannot escape voting, though it is useless. Let us wait till Wharton’s party is scattered, then go forward and do our duty.”

He ceased, and silence, broken only by the heavy breathing of the men, reigned in the apartment.

After some minutes, Robert Warren pulled out the tattered colors, and, gazing on them with a burning look, said :

“Had I been told yesterday that I would stand by and see this flag hauled down and trampled in the dust, I would have pronounced the assertion false. Yet to-day I saw it, and did not resist. Here is one star untorn—let it be to us the emblem of hope. Rise, every man here, few though we be, and lay his hands on these shreds!” All did as he desired. “Now swear with me,” he continued, “that come what may, though property be sacrificed and homes surrendered, we will be faithful till death to this flag, nor rest till it returns again to the Brazos.”

The hands were raised and each reponded, “I swear.”

In heaven that oath was registered with the sons of the martyrs and approved by Him who presides over the destinies of nations.

About five o’clock in the afternoon the voting, which had all gone one way, was nearly finished, and Robert Warren, followed by his party, advanced to the polls. He was met by Townsend, who handed him a ballot, and he replied by tearing it up, saying, “I have one of my own.”

“Let me see it,” asked Townsend in a rude voice.

Robert Warren did so, when Townsend glanced at it, then tearing it in pieces, with a savage oath shouted out: "Warren an' his party is goin' to vote agin us! Who'll stan' by an' see it done?"

The intoxicated by-standers, with angry menaces, drew near, and more than one knife was unsheathed. Warren coolly looked over the crowd, and in a clear, strong voice said:

"The man who says I am going to vote against my country, or in favor of abolition, lies. But before I can vote for secession I want first to see where we have been wronged. I have negroes, as many as any of you; I am a southern man by birth and interests; but I owe allegiance to the whole country and not a part, and for that whole country I am going to vote. If you prevent me, why, then, have the formality of voting?"

Warren moved toward the polls, but Townsend stepped before him, and with an oath said:

"Not so fast sir, yeh votes here when yeh votes right—not till then!"

"Stand aside, Townsend!" commanded Warren, his grey eyes turning black with anger; "I wish no quarrel, but am determined." Turning to the crowd he hurriedly addressed them: "I appeal to every man here—for you all know me—is there a stain on my good name? Did you ever know me to do aught an honest man would blush for? Can you say as much for this wretch, who pushes himself forward as the representative of better men? You know I am honest in my actions. Now, Townsend, stand aside!"

Warren stepped forward, but a violent push sent him staggering back among the crowd.

He recovered in an instant, and with a spring like

a tiger-cat, and a blow that sounded like the discharge of a pistol, Townsend was thrown senseless to the ground, and Warren, with his friends, stepped forward to deposit their ballots, which, as throughout the State and throughout the South, were not counted, for they were against secession. After voting, the Union men retraced their steps through the crowd in the direction of their horses, but found to their surprise the animals were gone, and could not be found.

After a fruitless search, Warren inquired from the bystanders if they had seen the horses moved, but he received in reply only black looks and muttered threats that "He and his damned pack would soon learn all about it."

CHAPTER III.

WAYLAID.

After a vain attempt to find their horses, the little body of Union men determined to walk home—first, however, agreeing to meet at the plantation of Mr. Warren on the following morning.

Robert had about five miles to walk, but the greater part of the road lay through the densely wooded bottom-land between Brazoria and Gonzelletta. Southern men before the war were unaccustomed to traveling on foot, particularly the Texans, who often rode over distances where it would be less of a physical exertion to walk than to saddle a horse. As Robert Warren hurried westward along this forest road, he wondered at the strange circumstance of all their horses being taken, and felt there was more in it than the spiteful trick of a few drunken rowdies. He regretted that he had not invited his friends home with him, where they could procure a remount, as they had all further to walk than himself, though not in the same direction. Looking carefully about as he hastened on, and peering cautiously into the jungle, he had passed over one-half the distance between Brazoria and his home, when, turning a sharp bend

in the road, he heard the crack of a rifle and at the same instant felt a burning sensation along the top of his head, and a feeling of blind giddiness overcame him. He staggered and fell to the ground, and before he could recover, three men rushed from the woods and sprang upon him. A blow was aimed at his head, but through the blood that streamed over his face he saw it descending, and, summoning all his strength, he leaped to his feet to see before him Henderson Townsend, with a look of fiendish hate on his brutal face.

“Kill the infernal abolitionist!” shouted Townsend, striking with a long knife at the wounded man. All three rushed again upon Warren, and, before he could draw his pistol, he was a second time brought to the ground, and one of the assassins, with a raised knife, sprang upon him. He could see the cold gleam above him, as the murderer’s arm was extended to give fatal force to the blow, and Warren closed his eyes. It was but an instant, when a yell, that thrilled the prostrate man into life, arrested the descending arm, and the next moment the blood of the would-be murderer was dashed, by a powerful blow from behind, over the intended victim. Another blow, quick as lightning, and a second man fell. Townsend turned on the new-comer, but his arm became palsied and his knees shook as he saw before him the towering form of Archy. The wide nostrils were dilated, the white teeth gleamed through the open lips, and a look of heroic manhood transformed the negro into the master of the cowering white man.

Before Robert Warren could rise, the strong black hand was clutched around the throat of Townsend,

and, blackening in the face, the white man wilted and fell; but the grasp was not relaxed. A few seconds and life would have been extinct, had not Robert Warren rose and released the hold of his servant.

“Stop, Archy! God bless you, my brave boy! you have saved me; you have done enough!”

“Bress de Lor’, Mauss Robut, yeh’s ’live!” said Archy, clasping in his strong arms the form of his master. Then he fairly sobbed, “Yeh’s bleedin’, oh, poor Mauss Robut! But let me ’lone, dey’ll kill me for dis, an’ I’ll have something to hang for.” Saying this, he moved toward Townsend, but his master stopped him by interposing between him and the trembling wretch.

“Well, you cringing hound,” said Warren, addressing Townsend, “you did not succeed in your murderous undertaking, thanks to this brave boy! I now know who stole our horses, and what they were stolen for.”

“Wall,” whined Townsend, “we hid ’em. Wharton told us to. But you’ll pay for this; you’ll swing for a killin’ of these fellers,” and he pointed to the bleeding forms before him.

“You know you lie, when you say Wharton directed this—with all his faults, he is brave and honorable. But, as you threaten me, I think it prudent to complete this job.” So saying, Robert Warren cocked his pistol and placed it against Townsend’s head. The craven fell on his knees, and, in a whining supplication, called, “Oh, don’t! don’t, Mr. Warren! It was all a drunken spree, and we didn’t mean to do any harm.”

“I was only trying your mettle, Townsend,” said

Warren, as he replaced his pistol. "Now I will leave you to care for your friends; and if we ever meet again with weapons drawn, your lies and supplications will not save you."

Leaving Townsend, with one of his companions dead and the other severely wounded, Robert Warren and his servant hurried along the forest road, now rapidly growing indistinct. The sun had set, and dense masses of black clouds came sweeping up from the Gulf, deepening the shadows on the road. When they emerged from the woods, on the edge of the prairie stretching to Gonzelletta, they found thousands of cattle and deer running to the bottom for shelter from the storm, which instinct told them would soon burst over the plain.

Robert released his hold of the black man's arm, and stood with uncovered head, while the cooling wind came, grateful to burning forehead and throbbing temples. Archy saw the dejected look of his master, and asked, anxiously:

"Is yeh sick, Mauss Robut? Coz, iv yeh is, I'll go ahead to de ranche an' fotch yeh a hoss; or, Mauss Robut, I'll tote yeh home like a chile." As Archy spoke the last words, he held out his strong arms, as if to lift his young master.

"No, Archy, I feel strong enough, but I am troubled. This affair with Townsend will get wind before two hours, and the whole settlement will be armed against us, and should they catch either of us, I am afraid, Archy, we would not bring a big price next day, except for the dissecting table." Robert Warren tried to smile at his own words.

"I knows dat, Mauss Robut," said Archy; "I knows

dey'd hang us, shuah, but I'se ready. I'd a wanted to die long 'go iv I'd any odder mausser, praise de Lor'; but ole mauss an' you ain't like white folks; yeh's like angels. Dis mornin' I couldn't stay at de house, fur I know'd dey'd be trouble in de town. So I stoled off, an' all day I looked fur yeh, as I hid by de road in de *chaparral*, [thicket.] An' when I seed you comin' I wuz mighty glad, an' kep' dark in de woods. Oh, Mauss Robut, I tanks de good Lor' I'se been de way to save yeh."

"Yes, I must acknowledge you understood matters yesterday better than I did, Archy, though it looks as if you had only postponed my death a few hours."

During the conversation the men resumed their journey, and as they neared Mr. Warren's plantation an idea of some weight seemed to strike Archy, for he took his master's arm, that rested on his, in both his hands, and said: "I kin fix it, Mauss Robut, I kin fix it; an' iv I dies, won't yeh take good care of Susy and de pickaninnies?"

The deep breast of the black man heaved as he looked on the dejected form of his master, and in a tone soft and gentle as a woman's, he continued:

"Don't trouble, Mauss Robut. Eberyting'll come right bimeby. Nobody'll b'lieve Hen Townsend, an' den I'll say 'twasn't you; I'll say I did it, an' I won't lie, nudder."

"Stop Archy! Don't talk in that way. The men who injure you for what you have done must do it after I am helpless. I have made up my mind, Archy. We must not remain here, not even to-night. We must start north for Kentucky, and when there, Archy, I'll make you a freeman. You can be your own master."

“Mauss Robut, I ain’t done nothin’ dat you want me to lebe yeh? I don’t want no mausser but you!”

“Well, Archy, I don’t mean that by being free you must leave me; you can be with me as you are now. I think, Archy, if I get away safely, that I will be a soldier, and fight till we bring the old flag back to the Brazos.”

Poor Archy, he had none of his master’s patriotic ardor. Why should he? All flags were alike to him.

Yet when his master had ceased speaking, tears were streaming down the honest black face. They were not forced by sorrow or pain, but rose from the great warm heart, the expression of a love that few but the angels feel.

By the time they had reached Mr. Warren’s house the night was pitchy black. The wind had calmed down, and an ominous stillness reigned over forest and plain. It lasted but a few minutes—then the pent-up storm burst over the land with a fury unknown to colder latitudes. Rapid flashes of lightning for a moment illuminated the broad, lifeless prairie, and then, as if all the parks of heaven’s artillery were opened, the deep thunder shook the earth. A few seconds of a rushing sound, and in torrents the rain poured to the earth. The harmony of the elements, like the laws of the nation, seemed broken. It looked as if the land were draped in mourning for the country’s death.

It was on such a night the Egyptians sank to peaceful rest, strong, prosperous, and happy—the youth to dream of coming glory, the old man to think of easy age, the maiden to sigh in her very happiness, the babe to slumber in childish innocence. But for one

instant in the dark night "a shadowy flash was seen." The death angel breathed on the first-born slumbering in life; then the red lips paled, the breast heaved once, and the eyelids tightened for the sleep of death.

So, deluded sunny South, it was with thee. Thy future shone bright and prosperous, while visions of power and glory flushed thy youths, and gave vigor to thy old men. Thy maidens twined chaplets for their warrior lovers, and poets sang the praises of thy dawning greatness. But the night went by, and the morning brought wailing for thy first-born. Thy strong men fill the grave and thy daughters are clad in sable garb. In the Red Sea thy armies have perished, and from the opposite bank hosannas resound from the free—made so by thy acts—yet singing no glad song in thy praise.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARLOR AND THE CABIN.

On opening the door, Robert Warren was met by his only sister, Mary, a young lady of twenty, who screamed on seeing the blood-covered features and torn clothing of her brother. He quieted her, begging her not to mention it to his father and mother, and assuring her that a wash would set him all right. He went directly to his room, and, after bathing, found that he had a painful, but by no means dangerous, scalp wound on the right side of his head. Having changed his clothing, he took down from a peg in his room a pair of handsome Mexican saddlebags, and filled them with such articles as he would need on his contemplated journey. Unlocking a drawer in his dressing-stand, he took from it an ivory-cased miniature, which he opened, and, removing the curl of brown hair twined above the picture, his face softened as he gazed for a few moments on the portrait of Amy Boardman. Then he replaced the curl and deposited the case in his breast pocket. Picking up the torn, blood-stained coat which he had taken off, he took from one of the pockets the roll of red, white, and blue rags that had once been the flag of

the stars, and as he carefully placed them in the pocket with the picture his lips grew firmer and an expression of age came over his face. He next took down from the mantel-piece, over which it hung, a short, silver-mounted rifle, and fastened about his waist a belt containing two pistols, cap and cartridge-boxes, besides a scabbard, from which protruded the silver handle of a Mexican hunting-knife. Having prepared everything so as to be ready to start in a moment, Robert Warren descended to the supper room, where his father, mother, and sister were awaiting him.

Mrs. Warren was very pale, and evidently agitated as she heard her son's steps, for she met him at the door and was clasped in his strong arms.

"My boy! my darling boy!" she exclaimed, "they tried to kill you, I know they tried to kill you, my brave, brave boy!"

"Sit down, mother," he said, kissing her and gently placing her in a chair, "I will tell you all about it directly." Then he went over to the great chair in which his invalid father was sitting, and he did what few men of his years do now-a-days, he kissed the grey-bearded face of his father, turned up to his with a look of pride and tenderness. Then, placing his arm about his sister, in a cheerful tone he briefly related to his anxious little audience the incidents of the day.

After supper he showed them the remnants of the flag, remarking to his agitated father, "Never mind, father, I will sew all these tatters on the new flag that you and I will hoist in Brazoria some day."

Mr. Warren, though scarcely able to move, rose to

his feet, and walking nervously across the room came back and took a seat beside his son.

“Robert,” he began, “you must leave here, and that this very night; for, even while I speak, Townsend may be setting the blood-hounds on your track. You must go to Kentucky. I am sure that good old State will be true to the Union. Your Uncle Louis will be a father to you. If there should be a war, Robert—and it looks like it—I need not advise your course. You will do what I would were I young again, that is, join the first military organization you meet on the right side.”

“I am glad to hear you talk so, father, for while coming home I formed a plan like that you have marked out. And I feel,” he continued, placing his hand fondly on his father’s, “that it will not be many months before you see me back again.”

“It may be long months, or even years, my boy, for the South is strong and armed; but there is a God, and right will not be overcome.”

“Of that I am certain, father, and were I assured of the welfare of the family, my greatest care would be removed.”

“You need not fret about us, my son. I am old and weak, to be sure, but more exercise may make me strong again. I can manage the plantation, and our new overseer appears to be a first-rate man. The hands are faithful; you know yourself we never had one take to the bottom. And then the prospect for plentiful crops is good; so that I will get on finely. You must take Archy along with you, and the two English horses, and let the boy have a rifle, for if a necessity arises, he can use it as well as any man on the prairie.”

“I shall do so, father; but I fear that when I am gone Wharton’s party may be enraged at my flight, and wreak their spite on you.”

“Do not be alarmed about that, Robert. Desperate and unprincipled as I know many of them to be, I am sure they would not harm me. They have always treated me with respect. You know we all voted for that noble man, Breckinridge, last fall.”

“True, father; but if I mistake not you will find this storm of secession has changed their natures. Why, even the ladies to-day seemed drunk with excitement, and blended with the crowd, displaying the secession badges they wore on their breasts.”

“How did Frank Addison vote?” asked Mary, with an apparent effort.

Robert looked sadly at her, and replied, as he drew her closer to his side, “I do not think Frank Addison is worthy of your love, my little sister. Try and think no more of him for the present.”

“What, brother Robert, do you mean to tell me that Frank Addison voted for secession? Oh, no, Robert, that cannot be; two days since he promised me he would not.”

“I am sorry to pain you more, dear Mary, but Addison’s was the hand that pulled down the Stars and Stripes from the court-house, and it was he who helped to trample the flag in the dust.”

The young girl leaned back in her chair, apparently overcome. The cold sweat stood in beads on her white forehead, and her lips grew ashy pale. Robert was alarmed, and hastily placed some water to her lips. At the same time Mrs. Warren came to her aid, and with a mother’s kind words tried to cheer

her. A few minutes of silence, and Mary rose with her hand to her heart, and said, in a supplicating tone :

“ Oh, my mother ! my brother ! do not ask me to believe this terrible thing all at once.”

Then she sat down beside her mother and laid her head on the breast where she ever found comfort. The pure, young heart had experienced its first stunning blow, and she closed her eyes, as if closing out the world might make the sorrow seem a dream.

At this juncture a servant entered the room, and Mr. Warren ordered him to tell Archy to come to the house.

At the same time Mrs. Warren exclaimed, as she gently untwined her arms from about her daughter, “ My poor boy, I have wholly overlooked your wound in our other sorrows. Why did you not mention it ?”

“ The very fact that I did not, mother, shows how trifling it is.”

Mary rose suddenly at this, and, with her old voice and manner, started to assist her mother in removing the hair and plastering the wound, an operation that required nerve. But tenderer hands never dressed a more uncomplaining patient. In the meantime Archy had come in, and, hat in hand, stood respectfully at the door, while he asked Mr. Warren : “ Did yeh sen fur me, Mauss Bob ?”

“ Yes, Archy,” said Mr. Warren, turning toward him, “ I want to speak to you on a subject of importance.”

Mrs. Warren and Mary heard the black man’s voice, and they hastened to thank him for his heroic conduct.

He replied: "De good Lor' knows, anybody'd a' done dat fur Mauss Robut; but I am sartin glad I was dar."

Mr. Warren continued: "Archy, you know the danger Master Robert and yourself are in. I feel it would be neither wise nor safe for either of you to remain here another day. You must accompany your young master, and when you get North he will make you free, and when the trouble is over I will send you your wife and children. You deserve all, Archy."

The last words were intended to compliment Archy, but he did not see it in that light, for, with some feeling, he said:

"Why is yeh talkin' 'bout freedom, Mauss Robut? I ain't dun nothin'; tole Mauss Robut so. I does'n't want to be free. I'll go wid Mauss Robut, and I won't lebe him till I die, praise de Lor'! But, mausser, while I's gone, won't you take car' ob Susey an' de pickaninnies?"

"Indeed I will, Archy. I give you my word that they will be well guarded till you return or meet them again. And now I want you to get ready for a long ride. Saddle the two English horses at once. Put on the best gear, and you must take my rifle and hunting-belt; you will find them hanging up in my room. You may have to use them, Archy; and, in that event, I know you will use them well. Here, also, are two hundred dollars in gold; you may need it if you and your master Robert should get separated."

Archy took the purse, and then reached out his broad, black hand to his master, which the latter clasped.

“Mauss Bob, I’ll take de rife, an’ I’ll only use it to help Mauss Robut. I’ll stan’ by ’im foreber. I trus’ in God to come back agin’, mausser, for He tembers de shorn lamb to de storm.”

So saying, Archy passed out of the room, where as a boy he had often waited on the plate of his young master.

After Robert’s wound had been dressed, he went to the door and looked out at the black night. The rain still poured down in torrents, and he was about to close the door, when he heard the rapid galloping of a horse across the bridge a hundred yards from the house. This was followed by a shout from the rider, and in a few seconds he was at the door. Throwing himself from his horse, wet and covered with mud, he sprang up the steps and into the house, when, without speaking a word, he slammed the door shut.

“What! you, Gaines?” said Robert, in astonishment, as he gazed on the dripping horseman.

“Yes, me, and only me. I am the only one of our party left. They were all waylaid and murdered. I was fired at, but escaped through the bottom. I found Townsend’s horse in the woods, and I have ridden here to give the alarm. Indeed, I feared you were killed, and am glad to find you all right.”

“They attempted it,” said Robert, “and but for Archy, they would have succeeded. But come to my room and change your clothes, for you must be half drowned, and after you have had a warm supper we can have a full conversation.”

“I will do so, Robert; but there is little time for talking. If we wish to continue this life, why, the

sooner we are in the saddle the better—though Heaven only knows where we are to fly to in this d——d State.”

“That I have determined to do. But come to my room and dress. Why, you are trembling with cold and excitement.”

Reaching the room, and while changing his clothes, Gaines told Robert that a German, named Muth, of their party, was hanged on the Colorado road; that Mr. Williams was shot through the heart, and the other two were killed going towards Columbia. This he learned from some men who passed him in the dark. They also said that three negroes had killed some of the “knights,” and then taken to the bottom.

“That,” said Robert, “is evidently my affair, of which I told you. Archy killed Sam Jackson, but it was to save my life.”

“Well,” continued Gaines, “that was not all. I heard them swear they’d kill every man in Texas who voted for the Union, and I believe they are in earnest.”

“I suppose they are, but you remember the saying about ‘catching before hanging,’ and if we would draw any comfort from it, I think we should start so as to bother them in overtaking us. I am going to take Archy, and there is no course left for you but to accompany us. I have an uncle, my father’s brother, in Kentucky, and I know he must feel as my father does in this matter. With him we will find a home, and when the Kentucky rifles go out to fight for the Union we will join them. What do you say to that, Gaines?” said Robert, laying his hand on the shoul-

der of his friend, who was sitting with downcast eyes.

“I am with you, heart and hand, Robert. Let us start within the hour. We can pass my house as we go up the river, for I must see my wife and boy. Poor girl, she will have a lonely time when I am gone,” and Gaines coughed to clear the choking lump which rose in his throat.

Robert took the arm of his friend and brought him down to supper, which he had ordered a servant to provide, and in the supper-room he explained to the astonished family the cause of Gaines’s presence.

While Gaines and Robert were drinking their coffee, Archy came to the door, and, in a voice strangely sad, said: “Mauss Robut, de hosses is ready.”

“All right, Archy,” said his young master in a tone of forced cheerfulness. “I want you to saddle Negrete, and fasten him to the rack with the other horses. Mr. Gaines is going with us.”

Archy went out to comply with his master’s orders. Passing down through the long street of cabins, which could only be seen by the lights glimmering here and there through windows and chinks, he opened the door of a cabin, about the middle of the quarters, and went in. A fire was blazing on the hearth and a young negro woman and two black men were sitting before it. The woman rose as Archy entered, and said, as she came close to him:

“Lor’ bress yeh, chile, yeh looks so tired an’ kinder sorry. Now do tell me all de matter. Yeh’s not sick, is yeh? fur yeh says jes’ nothin’ since yeh comed from de vil’ge.”

“Time ’nuff tu tell yeh, Susey; time ’nuff. Coon,” continued Archy, addressing one of the black men,

“go to de stable an’ put Mauss Bob’s saddle on Negrete, an’ tote ’im roun’ to de rack.”

“Lor’ a massy!” ejaculated Coon. “Mauss Bob ain’t agoin’ to ride dis bressed night, shuah?”

“Neber yeh mine, Coon. Jes’ go an’ fotch Negrete. Ye’ll know plenty soon.”

Coon rose, and, opening the door, gazed out into the murky night, then, drawing in his head, with wondering eyes and a long-drawn breath, he said:

“Archy, does yeh want dat ’ar hoss fotched roun’, sartin?”

“Yes, I does, Coon. Go right off, an’ if yeh’s skeered, take Dolph ’long.”

Dolph rose from his cosy seat, and while he and Coon groped their way to the stables, wondering in their innocent hearts “what de massy” was wrong, Archy sat down on the low stool beside his wife and gazed into the heap of glowing coals; then slowly looking up, he saw the eyes of the young woman fixed sadly, wonderingly on him.

“Susey,” he began, laying his hand on her’s, as if to ease the sorrow he was about to inflict, “I’se gwine ’way to-night—’long way off.”

“Yeh’s gwine ’way to-night—’long way off?” she exclaimed, repeating his words. “Whar’s yeh gwine, Archy, an’ wat’s yeh gwine fur?”

“Susey, Hen Townsend an’ two odders tried to kill young mauss to-night, but, bress de Lor’, I wus dar to sabe ’em. Iv we stays heah, Susey, dey’ll kill us sartin; so Mauss Robut an’ me mus’ clar out, right off. We’s agwine to Kaintuck, Susey, whar yeh comed frum, when yeh wuz a pickanin. An’ den Mauss Robut is jus’ gwine to fight fur de country.”

“Wat’s Mauss Robut been gone an’ done dat he mus’ fight, Archy? ’Pears dar’s nuffin’ but fightin’, an’ I reckon de worl’s comin’ to an end!” said Susey, suppressing the tears that were evidently rising. Archy tried to console her.

“Yeh can’t understan’ de laws ob de case, kase yeh’s a woman, Susey. Yeh’ll know some day—plenty time.” Then, changing his tone, he said: “Susey, I wants yeh to tink ob me when I’s gone, an’ take car’ ob de chillen. I’ll come back bimeby, an’ den, Susey, we won’t trubble no more.”

Susey laid her left hand on the one which already clasped her right, and while the warm tears stole quietly down her black face, she said, in a sobbing voice:

“I’d ’pears like I won’t see yeh no more, Archy, an’ de little cabin ’ll be berry lonely when de hans come back at night, an’ I’ll look down de lane fur yer shadder—but yeh won’t be thar. So I doesn’t want to lib, Archy, now yeh’s gwine away.”

“Don’t worry, Susey; I’ll be back bimeby, an’ yeh’ll larf whin I meets de pickanins at de doah, an’ de trubble ’ll be gone, an’ de good Lor’ ’ll bress yeh, Susey.”

“I’ll try, Archy, I’ll try; bud ’tis berry hard, so berry hard,” and she bowed her head on her knees.

Archy left her and stepped quietly to the little bed on the floor in the corner, where two plump, little woolly-headed children lay sleeping, with that peaceful, innocent look to be found as well in the children of the slave as those of the master. He knelt beside them, and his lips moved for a while as if in prayer. Then he stooped and kissed the children, while the

tears he would not have the mother see fell on the unconscious faces of the little ones. He rose, and, going back to the fire, laid his hand gently on Susey's shoulder, as she sat with bowed head, swaying herself with low, plaintive moans.

"Don't cry, Susey, chile, 'taint no good nohow. Led' me talk to yeh, Susey, 'fore I goes."

Susy raised her head and Archy continued: "Mauss Bob gabe me some money, Susey; it's mor'n I want. Yeh must take half, coz yeh may want it, poor chile; an' nobody knows wat's a-comin'."

Susey took the money, saying: "I'll keep it till yeh comes back, Archy, an' I pray de good Lor' it may be soon."

The tramping of a horse outside told them Coon and Dolph were passing with Negrete.

Archy hurriedly pulled on a pair of long, heavy cowhide boots, and taking down a pair of saddle-bags, often used by him in the branding season, he put in a few articles of clothing, and Susey gave him her new bandana wrapped around some bread and meat.

"Put dis in, chile," she said, "fur yeh mayn't hab time to eat noff in in demornin'—and Archy, honey, I wants yeh to keep de hankercher fur me."

It was no costly gift of remembrance—no portrait encased in golden lids; and yet to the heart of the poor black man it was as precious as the most costly jewel ever bestowed by lady fair upon gallant knight.

After he had everything prepared for the journey, Archy stood up beside his wife and said: "Susey, may de Lor' bress and guard yeh wid his shadowy wings till I come back. Good-bye, my chile, an

don't fret, nohow, for de bread cast on de waters shall return in many days."

He kissed her farewell, and before she could reply Archy had passed out of the little cabin, so dear to him, for in it dwelt his all in the world.

Poor Susey! All alone with her sorrow, she crept close to her little ones and poured out the overflowing woes of her heart in a low wail of agony. Again and again she kissed the unconscious children, as if their touch could heal her bleeding heart. Then, starting up, suddenly she threw a covering over her head and rushing out through the blinding storm, struggled toward the white folks' house. Reaching there, she saw Archy, leaning on his rifle before the window of the supper room, and at times drawing his sleeve across his eyes.

Inside the house another parting was taking place. Mrs. Warren, the tears streaming down her pale face, was clinging to the shoulder of her son. Robert spoke words of cheer which he did not feel, and tried to point her to his return, as if the faint prospect of future joy would ease her present sorrow. Again and again Robert kissed her troubled face, and then clasping Mary to his heart, told her to look ahead, for better days would come. Mr. Warren grasped his son's hand and tried to look a calmness he did not feel; for a moment he gave way, and Robert's arm prevented his falling to the floor. Archy stole in and bade the family good-bye. Then, promising to send back word by every opportunity, the three men, with their rifles slung over their shoulders, passed out, and mounting their horses, rode into the Egyptian darkness.

Tears were shed by the white ladies in the house. and from the eyes of the black woman they flowed, as, crouched 'neath the dripping magnolia, her hungry gaze fed on the retreating forms till lost in the black night.

CHAPTER V.

ANARCHY.

After the three horsemen had ridden beyond the grounds that surrounded Mr. Warren's house, Robert said to his white companion :

“You are going to see your wife to-night, before we strike north. I wish, before leaving Gonzelletta, to see one who, if I am spared to return, shall be mine.”

Without replying, Gaines turned his horse's head in the direction of Mrs. Boardman's plantation. By the time they reached there the rain had ceased, and the varying shades of blackness in the clouds showed the storm had spent its force.

Leaving his companions standing by their horses outside, Robert knocked at the door, and, after waiting for some time, a servant partially opened it, and, shading the light with her hand, peered cautiously at the intruder, whom she soon recognized.

“Why, Lor', Mauss Robut, is dat you?” she exclaimed.

On being assured that it was, she opened the door and conducted him into the parlor, informing him at the same time that “young and ole miss had done gone to bed.”

“I am sorry for that, Kitty; but you must tell them I am here. They will understand it and get up at once.”

The girl gave a knowing smile and left the room.

In a few minutes Mrs. Boardman entered, and expressed herself astonished at Robert's visit at such a time. Amy entered immediately after, and to both he gave a brief account of the day's adventures, and stated that he was then on his way to Kentucky.

Surprise and grief were painted by turns on the faces of his listeners, and unconsciously the tears rose to the eyes of one.

“I feel that it would be hazardous to remain here another hour, Mrs. Boardman; but, in leaving, it is with the firm belief that I will soon return in safety.”

“I have relatives in Kentucky, Robert, and, if you will excuse me, I will go to my room and prepare for some introductions. You may find them useful.”

Mrs. Boardman went to her room and Robert sat down beside Amy on the sofa.

“My little girl,” he said, gently stroking the brown hair that fell in wavy masses to her waist, “to-night I must say good-bye, for a longer time than we have ever been parted before; and when I return it will be, Amy, to make you mine. Keep up a brave heart, and I will write to you whenever I see a chance of your getting my letters.”

She looked into his face and said, “God is too good to part us forever. But be careful, Robert, and remember, 'mid every danger and trial, that I am praying for you.”

She rose, and going to a stand took from it a pair of scissors.

“Robert, I want that lock of hair you have been promising me so long.”

He bowed his head, and she started back with an exclamation of pain. “Oh, Robert! why did you not tell me this? They came nearer killing you than you would have me know.”

He assured her it was only a scratch, and told her to take a lock from the part of his head where there were no blood stains. She severed one, but it grew close to the path of the coward’s bullet, and was dyed with the first patriot blood shed in Texas.

“I will treasure this, Robert, more dearly, if possible, than ever, and in moments of dejection it will nerve my heart and intensify my hatred of those bad men whose acts have torn you from me!”

He drew her toward him, the strong arms pressed her to his heart, and their lips met—to be parted for years.

Mrs. Boardman shortly returned with the letters, and Robert, with a heavy heart, said farewell to his more than friends.

Again in the saddle, their horses’ heads were turned northward, and at a flying pace, regardless of roads, and guided only by the stars, which began to struggle through the thinning clouds, they swept over the prairie. For a short time they stopped at the house of Andrew Gaines, while he procured some clothing and exchanged Negrete for his own favorite mustang. Poor fellow, he left behind him his lovely young wife and child and his aged mother. No wonder that he remained silent till daylight and the sun came to drive the gloom from his heart.

About forty miles north of Gonzelletta they struck

the settlement of Santa Cruz, a collection of cattle ranches, with a log store in the middle. To pass the place would be to create suspicion at once, so they boldly rode up, and Robert asked if they could get breakfast and have their horses fed at the store. Being answered in the affirmative, the three men dismounted, and, while Archy cared for the horses, Robert and Gaines entered the store, which, in truth, was more like a bar-room, with its array of bottles, than a store, for cowhide boots and whisky appeared to constitute the stock in trade. A number of men, apparently the worse for the last night's carouse, were sitting around on the empty barrels and broken chairs, discussing the result of the vote in Fort Bend County.

Our friends resisted any attempts at pumping until after they had partaken of a warm breakfast, of which they stood much in need.

Returning to the store-room, Robert heard one of the men say :

“Boys, didn't yeh know ole Jackson went up last night?”

“No, you don't say!” replied a chorus, in surprise.

“Sure as shootin'! The boys on the East Bernard strung him, an' I heard they was a-goin' for Dempsey. I kinder pity Dempsey if they catch him!”

“Serves the d—d old traitor right,” said a young man with blood-shot eyes, spitting vigorously on the floor.

“I helped boost that cussed long-legged Adams, an' I'd do the same to ole Sammy Houston if he wuz here,” said another.

“Sam's gone back on Texas, shuah. Come, boys,

licker again," said an owly-looking man, who up to this time had been whittling the top of the barrel on which he sat, with his bowie-knife.

At this juncture a tall young man entered the room and was greeted with a "Hurrah fur Captain Wilson!" Captain Wilson, after taking a drink, in which all joined, said:

"Boys, I'm going to raise a company to fight the Yankees, if necessary. How many here will join me?"

"I," "I," "I," came from every man in the room except Warren and Gaines. Their silence attracted the attention of one of the men, who, going up to Warren with a swagger, said:

"See here, friend, are you willing the South should have her rights?"

"Indeed am I," replied Warren with startling emphasis.

"And in case the Yankees shouldn't let us have them, are you willing to fight for them?"

"With all my strength!" said Warren.

"Then why in thunder don't you fall in and say so?"

"Oh, you have no organization, nor do I at present see a necessity for one. But the moment the South is subjected to an act of tyranny, I will raise a regiment and command it myself."

"And I will be a high private in your command," said Gaines; and Archy, who by this time had brought up the horses, interposed with—"Wall, I reckon if I can't fight, I can jes' beat any man in de regmen' a cooken'."

"Come up an' licker, every man, nigger an' all,

yea just the bulliest kind of boys," said the questioner.

Warren poured out a glass of native wine, and raising it, addressed the crowd: "Friends, drink my toast." The glasses were all filled. "May the arm of the traitor who opposes right wither, and may he who loves not his country never have a home in the sunny South!"

Loud cheers greeted this ambiguous toast, and Warren's hand was grasped by every man in the room.

Not deeming it prudent to tarry long, the horsemen were soon again pushing southward, their plan being to go through Rusk and Marshall, in southern Texas, thence into Arkansas, and through Tennessee into Kentucky.

A few miles above Santa Cruz they crossed the river by a ferry, and, while leading their horses up the muddy banks, and beyond the swampy approach to the river, Archy's attention was arrested by an object in the advance. On a nearer approach it proved to be the body of a man, fastened to a tree by the hands and legs. The head was a pulpy mass, and the bark on the tree on each side was chipped and furrowed by bullets, showing that the man had been made a target of by his cruel murderers. Warren noticed a piece of paper at the foot of the tree, that had evidently been pinned to the body, but which the rain had beaten off. Taking it up, he read, in rudely written characters, "*A warning to all abolitioners.*"

Warren looked steadily at the body, and in a low voice said: "Yes, the very name that from my childhood I have hated will now be applied to me, for in

the South to-day abolition and Union are synonymous."

"I see nothing ahead but anarchy, Robert. Lawlessness all around us, and murder rising to a virtue."

"Don't give up, Gaines. My faith is firm in God, and I would as soon doubt Him as doubt the success of what we deem right."

"I have no hope. A principle led me to vote for Union yesterday—the fear of death drives me, I know not whither, to-day."

All day long they rode across the prairies, each busy with his own thoughts. Occasionally they saw bands of horsemen riding in the distance, but they met with none. Once they stopped to rest their horses, when they lunched on the bread and meat which the thoughtful Susey had done up in the red bandana.

As night approached thoughts of food and a camping place, where water could be found, came up. Urging their horses to a strip of timber, which in Texas is always an indication of water, Robert Warren rode ahead of the party to a depression, or "hog-wallow," in the prairie. There he touched his horse, the intelligent animal lay down, and Warren took a deer-call from his pocket and gave a few bleats. Suddenly a hundred red deer rose, and, snuffing the wind, with short, proud steps, looked around in surprise. They were too far off to risk a shot, so Warren mounted his horse, lying full length along him, then giving a low whistle the horse rose, and, with head turned in the direction of the deer, walked deliberately toward them. The rider was unobserved till surrounded by the herd, when he suddenly rose, and

the startled deer turned, and with long bounds dashed away ; but one grand buck was too late for Warren's rising. Selecting and firing appeared to be one instantaneous act, and the deer came to the ground. Dismounting from his horse, he walked up to the dying buck, and ran his hunting knife through the neck. By this time Archy came up and threw the deer across his horse, with scarcely a comment ; and, riding to the timber, each proceeded to prepare the camp. Warren dressed the deer, Archy picketed the tired horses, and Gaines started a fire and cut green sticks on which to toast the steak. Their appetites were good, and they enjoyed their hunter's fare. They were wearied, and slept soundly by the blazing camp-fire, with the stars shining down, and the still air giving no sound but the feeding of the horses.

CHAPTER VI.

“NEAR USED UP.”

While Warren and his companions slept by the camp-fire, after their ride of ninety miles, the home at Gonzelletta was anything but peace.

Henderson Townsend, after Robert Warren had left him on the Brazoria road, returned to the town, leading back his wounded comrade. Although it was quite dark when he reached Brazoria, the drunken crowd had not dispersed. The bar-room was full of swaggering men, singing ribald songs, and swearing vengeance on the Yankees and the men who voted for Union. The appearance of Townsend among them, in the manner stated, was the signal for a burst of surprise.

“By the living Jupiter and Santa Anner, Hen, yer a beautiful picture!” cried one.

“How the devil did yer both git fixed that way?” asked another.

Townsend, with an air of great weakness, dropped into a chair, while his companion went out to cleanse the blood from his face and have his wound attended to.

“I’m near used up,” began Townsend with a whine; “will some one give me a drink?” After swallowing

a tumblerful of whisky, Townsend groaned and pressed both his hands around his throat, and then groaned again.

“See here, Townsend, you’re coming it a little stiff. You can’t make me believe you’re hurt as bad as all that. Come, trot out your story. We’re all spilin’ to hear your yarn,” said a young man, whose very expression spoke a contempt for the whining wretch.

“Well, you know we started to make that cuss, Warren, take back his high-flown words, and when we came up with him he showed fight. Oh, boys, some one give me a drink!”

“Well, I’ll be d—d if I don’t think Warren took the starch out of you, Townsend. Why, confound you, you’ll be as drunk as a swill-fed hog if you don’t go on,” again spoke the young man, who appreciated Townsend. After swallowing some more liquor, Townsend continued:

“Warren showed fight an’ dared us to come near him. He called us Wharton’s hounds, an’ renegade traitors. Then me an’ Dempsey ran at him, but he had three niggers hid in the chaparral, an’ they run at us from behind, an’ that big nigger, Archy, cut Dempsey’s head open with an axe, an’ knocked Fleming down. I fought the two of them.”

“Stop, Townsend, didn’t you say there were three niggers and Warren?” interposed the young man.

“Yes; but I scared off two of them: they took to the bottom, an’ I fought the others till it were no kinder use, and I took to the woods myself. I saw that nigger Archy pick Sam Daprey’s pockets, an’ then foller Warren to Gonzelletta. Then I come roun’ an’ helped Fleming in, an’ now we’re here.”

He spoke the last words with the tone of a man asking compassion, and truly he received it. A storm of savage imprecations followed the narrative of Townsend's injuries, and a number of the men sprang to their feet, swearing that they would start for Warren's at once, and hang him and all his niggers to the trees. One of them opened the door, as if to carry out his threat, but the petty tempest of human wrath was hushed before the mighty anger of the elements. Down in torrents came the drenching rain. Flash after flash of lightning blinded those who gazed out, and the crashing, deafening thunder filled the men in the bar-room with awe.

"Boys, no man kin live out sich a night as this. I never seed sich a storm on the Brazos. If it don't rise to-morrow and sweep suthin to h——l, I'm a liar."

The door was slammed to, and for a while the wrongs of Townsend were forgotten in comments on the storm. But little was said till the tornado began to abate, and then cooler reason had resumed its sway.

The young man who had attempted to joke Townsend was the first to return to the subject. His face was frank and intelligent, but showed signs of early dissipation. Filling a glass with water, he drank it off, and then, with the gestures of a boyish declaimer, began :

"Now, I know Hen Townsend, and I'll be hanged if I always swallow what he says. He ain't just the fellow to tie to, in my opinion; but I think he has told pretty near the truth in the story he has just given. I can take it all in, but his fighting Warren. You all know that's cussed stuff."

Here Townsend groaned and asked for another drink, while young Bentley continued :

“ Now, I’m in for catching Warren, but this ain’t just the night for it.”

“ Not by a thunderin’ sight,” said one of the men who had been so anxious to start at once.

“ If we go out there to-morrow, why, Robert Warren wouldn’t be found lying on the sofa with handcuffs on, saying, ‘Boys, I’m your prisoner, take me out and hang me.’ Not much, I reckon! If we meet him to-morrow we’ve got to fight, and I think Bob Warren ain’t behind any man when you git him thar. Now, my plan is to go out to-morrow night, after dusk ; they’re more likely to be in then than any other time. And we can go for them. Then we’ll bring them to Brazoria, try them, and if found guilty, why—” and Bentley finished the sentence in pantomime, by tightening the knot on his cravat, holding one end up, and dropping his head on his right shoulder, with a gurgling sound, intended to imitate a death-rattle.

This plan met the approval of those present, as indeed anything else which Bently might have said would. Then the party sank to sleep, some on the floor, some on chairs, and Townsend, by virtue of his injuries, on the only spare bed in the tavern. About noon of the following day a meeting of the citizens was called to organize the militia, and Wharton again spoke in the court-house. He had dispatches from Houston, stating that enough of the State had been heard from to warrant the statement that Texas had gone overwhelmingly for secession. He told them that “Brazoria County had done nobly, though he was pained, as his

hearers must be, that James Bell, of the supreme bench, a native of that county, had voted at Austin for Union." He told his hearers that friends must be sacrificed and all ties severed, if they found them to be advocates of Union. Those who voted for the Union should be made to go north, for there were the people in sympathy with them. He desired the people to maintain law and order until such time as the seceded States could remodel their laws and appoint proper officers. One thing the people must watch, and that was the latent love of the old Union which some might yet entertain. Every word breathed against the South or her holy cause was a crime so heinous, that the greatest penalty known to the law should be enforced to crush out opposition.

Such was the advice of Wharton, and such the teaching of hundreds of others in the "Lone Star State." How well those lessons were received a thousand desolate homes can testify. Widows wailed in sorrow for their husbands, and children watched in vain for a father's return. Murder, drunken with the blood of the faithful, stalked through the land, respecting not the grey hairs of the patriarch, pitying not the supplications of the youth.

About the time that "nature's sweet restorer" had rendered Robert Warren and his companions oblivious to the world and its cares, a band of some fifteen horsemen, armed to the teeth, dismounted in the rear of his father's plantation. Fastening their horses, they advanced so as to surround the house by the time they reached it. While moving cautiously through a field, Townsend swore a savage oath, shouting at the same time :

"See here, boys, here's my horse that Warren's niggers stole!" and, sure enough, there was Townsend's horse. He had succeeded in breaking his halter and getting into the fields after Gaines had dismounted the previous evening. The finding of the horse was the spark which fired the hearts of the desperate band. They were soon around the house, and two of the men were sent to the negro quarters, where, by threats, they learned from Susey that Archy and his master had fled to Galveston.

Bentley, as leader of the party, accompanied by Townsend, knocked at the door, and, on its being opened, they walked in, asking the servant if Mr. Robert Warren was home.

"Mauss Robut ain't heah. He's done gone, shuah."

"None of your nonsense," said Bentley, in a savage tone, "tell your master, girl, I want to see him."

The servant soon returned, telling the men that Mr. Warren would see them in his room. They strode in, and found the old gentleman looking haggard and reclining on a sofa. Motioning them to seats, he asked, "Gentlemen, what is your pleasure with me?"

"We come, sir," said Bentley, "armed with the law, to arrest your son and three of your servants for the murder and robbery of one of our loyal citizens, and for the attempted murder of others, besides the crime of horse-stealing, which can be proved as well."

"These are strong charges, sir; but, I rejoice to say, they are wholly without foundation, consequently one is as difficult to prove as the other."

"We will be better able to judge after the parties are tried," said Bentley, "and now I wish to know where we can find them?"

"Indeed, gentlemen," replied Mr. Warren, "I cannot tell you."

"You mean you will not."

"I desire to convey no such impression, sir; though I might, with truth, say I would not if I could," said Mr. Warren, sitting upright.

Bentley continued: "You must be aware of their whereabouts, and such being the case, you shield their crimes from the law, and become a partner in their guilt. But we will not be satisfied with your denial. Boys!" he shouted, going to the window, "come in here, three of you, right off."

Three rough, heavily-bearded fellows sprang in at the call, and were ordered by Bentley to search the house. While they were doing so, he turned to Mr. Warren and said:

"If your son has fled, we want no further evidence of his guilt."

"My son has fled, sir, but he is innocent of the crimes alleged. Last night he was attacked by three armed villains; among them the man who stands beside you. He was wounded, and but for his servant would have been killed."

"If such is the truth, Mr. Warren, why did your son leave Columbia County?"

"He left from no fear of a just law and an impartial judgment, but to avoid the fury of the fanatics, who hate him because he dared to do his duty."

"'Tis a lie!" roared Townsend, blind with rage; "'tis a lie, you old abolitionist!"

The color rose to the pale cheeks of Mr. Warren, his dark eyes flashed, and a momentary strength braced him, as he hurled a heavy silver pitcher at Townsend's

head, and then fell exhausted to the floor. Townsend, with his arm, warded off the blow, and then jumped with his whole might on the prostrate man. Mary, who had entered the room at that moment, with a cry of pain threw her arms for protection around her prostrate father, while Bentley, shouting out, "You miserable coward!" hurled Townsend across the room.

The noise brought Mrs. Warren in, and with Bentley's aid they lifted the fainting old man on the sofa, and the distracted wife and daughter after a time restored him to consciousness.

At this juncture the three men who had been searching the house returned, stating they had not found Robert Warren, but in his room they discovered the clothes he had worn at Brazoria, torn and covered with blood.

"These," said Bentley, holding up the blood-soaked garments, "are further proofs of your son's guilt, and were it not for the murdered man we buried to-day, and the wounded man, who may not live, I would not credit Townsend's story."

"Do you not know," said Mr. Warren, in a scarcely audible voice, "that others who voted for Union were attacked and killed going from Brazoria about the same time. You must be aware, too, that all those men had their horses stolen by Townsend. He acknowledged it to my son."

"No I didn't," said Townsend quickly. "Your son's an abolitionist, an' yesterday he voted agin' us, an' he called our flag a rag; an' any man that does that should be hung. Wharton says so."

Mr. Warren turned to Bentley:

“Did Wharton utter such sentiments to the people?”

“Yes, sir; he did,” was the reply.

“Then,” continued Mr. Warren, “I am as guilty as my son; for had I been able to attend the polls I should certainly have voted as he did.”

“Didn’t I tell yer?” roared Townsend. “Didn’t I tell yer he was a abolitionist? Now, Bentley, carry out yer word, an’ have this man put through.”

A shade of sorrow passed over Bentley’s face as he said: “Mr. Warren, I regret that I must take you to the town, and that I am compelled to continue my search till we find your son.”

“Take the old traitor along!” shouted several men who had crowded on the gallery, and were looking in through the windows. “Take him along, an’ string him up if he goes back on us!”

“Oh, gentlemen!” cried Mrs. Warren, throwing her arms around her husband’s neck. “For the sake of heaven do not move my husband. He is an invalid, and cannot bear it. Take me, my property, my life; but spare him. Oh! by the love you bear your fathers, spare him!”

“Hush, my wife,” said the old man, attempting to rise. “Do not fret; they will not injure me beyond taking me to the village. Mr. Bentley, you will let me take my own carriage, and permit my daughter to accompany me?”

“Certainly, sir; and I will here say that if I consulted my own feelings you would not have to move one inch.”

In a short time the carriage came to the door, and Mr. Warren, leaning on the arm of his care-worn daughter, stepped in, with a kind word to his weep-

ing wife. The horsemen formed around, as if they were guarding a desperado, and the procession moved towards Brazoria.

The carriage stopped not till it had reached a heavy brick structure in the center of the town, when Townsend came to the window, and in a taunting voice said, "Come right out, sir, here's yer ranche till yeh cool down on the Yankee an' the nigger."

Mary helped her father out, and, looking up at the jail, a cold thrill ran through her, and she clung for support to her father's frail arm.

Bentley was not among the guards. Hasty as he was, his natural goodness of heart led him to avoid this scene.

After standing a few minutes before the building, a rough voice shouted out, "Bring along yer man, Townsend—got his quarters all ready."

"Oh my father! my dear, dear father, you cannot live there! Oh men, mercy, mercy! My father has done no wrong! Before God, my father has done no wrong! He is old and sick, and the damp prison will kill him. Oh, as you hope for mercy at God's throne, don't break my heart! Don't kill my father!"

"My child, my little Mary, do not fret," said Mr. Warren in a kind, strong tone; "I will be out in a few days. They cannot keep me here. Why, I will be safely back to Gonzelletta in a few days."

Poor girl, she could not speak. The gentle heart was breaking, and even the stars seemed to look with pity on her mighty woe.

The prison doors closed that night on the old patriot, and there was weeping in his once happy home at Gonzelletta. He prayed God that he might live

to see all his dear ones again, and peace restored to the land.

God answers those prayers which, in His far-seeing wisdom, seem best. After many days the old man was released. He lay upon the old sofa, and soft footsteps moved around him. Mary knelt at his feet, and the soft hand of his wife wiped the cold white forehead, and whispered words of tenderness and hope. The spirit fluttered on the thin pale lips as he tried to respond. Once they moved as if in prayer. Then for a time all was still, save the ticking of the old clock, and an occasional sob. Then in an audible voice, that sounded as if from a better land, he said: "I forgive them. Bless, O God! bless the cause of right! Preserve my wife, my children. Robert, Robert!" A scarcely audible sound followed. One long breath, and slowly, as the manly chest settled down, the spirit passed out and left him as if asleep.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JOURNEY NORTHWARD.

For thirteen days Robert Warren and his friends pushed northward, prudently avoiding the villages and thick settlements, till they reached the beautiful town of Marshall in northeastern Texas. Here they determined to stop, in order to obtain supplies and news from the world, out of which they had been shut on their long ride. Robert Warren was astonished to hear men boasting in Marshall, that, while all the northeastern counties had voted for Union, the returns were so falsified as to make the result seem the other way. Thus Texas, though at heart in favor of the Union, was rushed out. Thousands were deterred from voting as they felt, and where they did vote against secession, the result was changed.

On the evening of the arrival of our party in Marshall, the stage, heavily laden with passengers, came in from Houston. From one of the new arrivals Warren succeeded in borrowing a few copies of the *Houston Telegraph*. While reading them over his eyes rested on the following paragraph :

“\$5,000 REWARD!

“SHOCKING MURDER IN BRAZORIA!

“BRAZORIA, *March 24, 1861.*

‘The above reward will be given for the body of

Robert Warren, jr., late of Gonzelletta; the aforesaid Warren being guilty of the cold-blooded murder of two of our loyal citizens. He was aided in his fiendish acts by a negro who answers to the name of 'Archy.' The murderer Warren is twenty-five years of age, dark-complexioned, with black moustache and grey eyes. He is strongly built, is about six feet in height, and has a strong, decided way of speaking. Half the above reward will be given for any information that may lead to his capture. All persons knowingly harboring or aiding the aforesaid fugitives are subject to arrest and trial as abettors in their offense."

This was signed by many of the prominent citizens of Brazoria, and was made the subject of an editorial in the *Telegraph*. The crime of murder in the southern States was treated as the direct effect of abolition teaching. The article closed by invoking its readers, "as they loved peace, religion, and liberty, to crush down every feeling of sympathy for the old Union. That once honored word has lost its original meaning, and now denotes abolition, tyranny, puritanism, free-lovism, and every other crime—a reproach to civilization and the race."

Robert handed this paper to Gaines before returning it to the gentleman from whom he had borrowed it. Gaines read it with compressed lips, and having finished it, he said hurriedly and incautiously:

"Robert, the man who edits that paper, the fellow who penned that article, is a native of New England. I knew him when he first settled in Houston, a second-rate school teacher. But he married old Burton's daughter, and owns slaves. The scoundrel! Why, in

his own State he must have been the most whining abolitionist and constitutional hater of the South. Now, he is a sneaking traitor who would not give up the smallest negro on his place to save the whole government. I say d—n the Yankees!"

Robert saw that Gaines was getting excited, and stopped him by calling to his mind, in a whisper, their situation.

The gentleman who had loaned the paper overheard Gaines's excited speech, and looking up to Robert he tapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Excuse me, but I wish to speak privately with you for a few moments."

"Certainly, sir," said Warren as he followed the man up stairs. Entering a room, his conductor turned the key in the door, and in a calm tone said, "Be seated, Mr. Warren."

For a moment Robert could not speak, but stared in wonder at the man thus addressing him. He soon recovered his self possession, and, drawing a pistol from his belt, asked in a tone which showed he was in no trifling humor:

"Who are you, sir? and what did you bring me here for?"

"Put up your pistol, Robert Warren; I am a friend. My name is Charles Anderson, formerly of Ohio, and I think, sir, that my patriotism is as strong as yours. I brought you here to put you on your guard, for, if I mistake not, others, less friendly, have the same suspicions I had."

Mr. Anderson held out his hand as he concluded, and Robert clasped it warmly.

"God bless you, sir. But you do not believe that

infamous story in the paper?"

"Believe it? no! I heard a true version of the whole affair before I left Houston, and I have been praying ever since for your escape."

"Well, Mr. Anderson, you know my situation; what would you advise under the circumstances?"

"I would advise you to start this very night, if your horses can stand it, for Shreveport, Louisiana. You can reach there by morning, and then rest but little till you put the Mississippi between you and Texas."

Robert Warren agreed to follow the advice of his new friend and start for Shreveport before dark.

Mr. Anderson told him more about the iniquity of the election, and of his own determination to go north as soon as possible—

"For," said he, "I thank God, Mr. Warren, there are some northern men in the South who dare to be true, and who, though their efforts have been futile, have tried to stem the torrent of rebellion. I saved this," continued he, showing a flag wrapped around his breast inside his waistcoat, "I saved this from the fury of the mob at Austin, and I will retain it till I can hoist it again over the capitol of Texas."

Then Robert's eyes filled as he took the shreds of the torn flag from his own pocket, and briefly recounted to Mr. Anderson the facts in connection with the voting in Brazoria, with which the reader is already familiar.

Deciding to act on Mr. Anderson's advice at once, Robert descended with that gentleman to the bar-room, where he found Gaines, and informed him in an undertone of his determination to leave Marshall

at once. After partaking of a hearty supper, they bade Mr. Anderson farewell, and before it was quite dark they were seven miles from Marshall, on the Shreveport road.

Considering the immediate danger as passed, they slackened the speed of their weary horses, and rode at a walk till ten o'clock. While ascending a hill on the road, they were startled by the sound of horses galloping rapidly behind them. Archy dismounted, and placing his ear to the ground listened for a few seconds, then rising, hurriedly said :

“Mauss Robut, dar’s mor’n ten, an dey’s comin dis way right smart, shuah.”

“It may be some party in pursuit, and, if so, it would be foolish to race them with our jaded horses. Gaines, are your arms ready, and yours, Archy?” Being answered in the affirmative, Robert continued, “I think our wisest plan is to turn into the woods and dismount till they pass.”

Dismounting, they led their horses into the woods and for some distance through the dense undergrowth. They were about ten yards from the road when a party of horsemen galloped to the top of the hill, and the fugitives could see by the starlight the glistening of their polished guns. Their horses were panting from their hard ride, and one of the party shouted out :

“Halt, fels! I don’t think they com’d on this har road, or we’d overtook ’em. I think we’re on the wrong scent.”

“No we ain’t,” answered another, “kase I looked the tracks two mile back, an’ they wuz on this road, an’ they couldn’t a’ took another, fur thar ain’t none.”

“Waal,” said the first speaker, who appeared to be

the leader, "thar's no kinder use in all on us agoin arter 'em by this light. Let six of yer keep down the road, an' if yer ain't back in an hour, we'll think yer on the trail, and foller. We'll rest the critters an' start a fire till then."

This was agreed to, and six of the horsemen galloped rapidly down the road, while the remainder, some eight in number, dismounted and took off the bridles to let their animals rest. Soon a bright glare lit up the woods from the camp-fire of the pursuers. They were about sixty yards from the spot where the three men stood by their horses, and so still was the atmosphere that the breaking of the smallest twig could be heard from their place of concealment.

"They may not be after us, Gaines," whispered Warren; "I will make sure. Keep the bridle over Don's head, Archy, for I may have to mount rapidly. Be still as the grave till I return."

So saying, Robert Warren carefully removed his long Mexican spurs, and putting them in his saddlebags, walked with the cautious step of an Indian toward the fire.

He noticed within a few yards of the group a tree much larger than the usual scrubby growth, and, getting into its shadow, he crawled close to it, and from its protection he drank in with thirsty ears every word of the men around the fire.

"If," said one, who had stretched himself on his face full length before the fire, "if we'd com'd up with them thar fellers, I reckon they'd a showed right smart fight."

"You bet," laconically grunted a stalwart giant, who stood basking himself in the heat of the blazing logs.

“We’d orter got ’em in town,” said the leader. “That feller, Bentley, had orter come hisself. I’m afeared we’ll have the hunt for nothing.”

“Waal, I dunno about takin’ ’em in town,” said the first speaker. “If we’d a tried it, I reckon we’d a’ had more to fight than a nigger and two white men, for thar is more mangy cusses in Marshall than I ever seed; an’ if they knowed when we wuz comin’, you bet, they’d a follered an’ gi’n us trouble.”

“See here,” said the giant before referred to, “if I knowed them fellers wasn’t murderers, by thunder, you wouldn’t catch me arter ’em.”

“Yes, Tennessee, I believe, as true as I’m Sam Rose, yer as much of a Yankee as any of ’em, if ye’d only spunk ter show it,” said the leader.

“If I’d only spunk to show it! You blasted fool, do yeh suppose I darn’t say jest what I please, an’ do what I please, without fear of any man?” asked the man addressed as Tennessee, taking a step toward Rose.

“I don’t think yer skeered, but I do think yeh ain’t jist O. K.; that’s all.”

“Waal,” replied Tennessee, “I’ll tell you uns how I feel ’bout it. Ginral Jackson loved the Union, an’ cussed if I don’t to. The Yankees never did me harm, an’ if we’re goin’ to have war, why, I jest think it’ll be a rich man’s quarrel an’ a poor man’s fight. I ain’t spilin’ to fight unless some onery fool gives me gab.”

“Yes, Tennessee, if all on us did that, the abolitionists would come down har an’ make yeh marry a nigger wench. How would yeh like that, ole fel?”

“I wouldn’t like it, if it wuz so; but that’s chile

talk. I've got a white woman fur a wife, an' a bully girl she is. But I'll tell yeh what, Rose, some of you fellers mout as well have nigger wives as live as yeh do."

"What do yeh mean?" demanded Rose, rising. "Tennessee, yer as bad as the houns we're a chasing, an' if yeh want to keep yer skin whole, my advice is to clar' out jist as soon as yeh kin."

"Ye'd better keep yer shirt on, Rose. Another word in that style, an' by the ghost of Ginral Jackson, I'll roast yeh on this fire!" and Tennessee fingered the hilt of his huge knife and kicked the logs before him till a shower of sparks, like a fiery fountain, flew upward.

At this point of the conversation the loud neighing of a horse in the woods rang out and startled the men around the fire.

"By ——, they're in thar!" shouted Rose, springing to his feet and advancing toward the tree behind which Robert was concealed. "I heerd some one speak in thar, sure! Tumble up, men; we'll cotch them."

The suggestion of Rose was hastily complied with, the men seizing their arms and rushing in the direction indicated by the sound.

Quick as a flash, Robert Warren sprang from behind the tree, and with his knife cut loose the horses of his pursuers, and then with a yell, such only as an Indian or a Texan can give, he drew his pistol and fired toward Rose's gang. They turned, to a man, to meet this attack in the rear, but Warren was not to be seen. He sprang unperceived into the woods, and in a few seconds was mounted on his horse.

"Don't move till they come up again," he whis-

pered to his companions; "and then fire right at them till your pistols are exhausted. After that, follow my example."

Half of Rose's men started in pursuit of the stampeded animals, and the others cautiously returned to the woods. Like statues the fugitives sat their horses, with their pistols cocked and pointed in the direction of their pursuers. On they came, so close that Warren could hear their hurried breathing. One of the horses moved; a wild yell announced the discovery by the nearest of the party, and at random a half dozen rifles were discharged in the direction of Warren. Between him and the blazing fire he saw the advancing figures not ten paces off. He leveled and shouted "Fire!" Two of the men fell, and again Warren cocked and fired. Rose shouted out, "Git out of the light, boys, or we're gone!" and the men rushed back toward the fire. Warren spurred his horse into the middle of the road, and shouted: "Hurrah for the Union and General Jackson!"

Then they wheeled their horses, and the spirited creatures needed no spur to obey the pressure of the knee. Away they flew; but they were not alone. A giant horseman echoed Robert's shout, and cried out, "Keep to the left!" Instinctively the horses were turned, and the four men dashed past the fire and the bewildered pursuers. They were retracing their steps on the Marshall road. After riding about a mile, Robert reined in his horse to listen for their pursuers. The galloping of one horse could be heard advancing, and they determined to wait till he came up. In a few seconds the huge horseman drew rein beside them.

He saluted them with, "Wall, frien's, that wuz

purty nice did, wa'nt it? But keep agoin'—foller me."

Saying this, he dashed ahead, and without a comment Warren and his friends followed him. About half a mile further on, the guide called out, as he dashed into the woods to the right, "Injun file! Hug close to yer saddles!" At a rapid gallop they sped through the black jungle, though, from the smoothness of the horses' tread, Warren judged they were riding over a beaten path.

After riding for about two hours, during which not a word was spoken, they reached a wide stream, into which the guide plunged and the fugitives followed. The river was fordable, and after ascending the opposite bank, they saw the light of a cabin a short distance ahead. Dismounting before the door, the guide gave a peculiar rap, and soon it was opened by what in the indistinct light appeared to be a very old man.

"Who's thar?" he asked.

"Frien's to you an' Ginral Jackson," was the reply.

"Why, Tennessee, I'm right glad to see yeh. Come in, come in," said the man at the door.

"My frien's wants rest fur the night, Tad, an' our critters are nigh gin out, so I reckon we'd better ten' to them fust."

The proprietor of the cabin stepped back, and soon reappeared, shading a light, with which he led the way to a shed in the rear of his cabin. An abundance of fodder was quickly placed in the racks, and the jaded animals, divested of their heavy saddles, were soon enjoying the strange and welcome hospitality.

The individual addressed as "Tad" then returned with his guests to the cabin.

"These men is frien's of we'uns, Tad," said Ten-

nessee, by way of introduction. "I tuk 'em out of a big fuss over on the Shreveport road. They goes in strong for Ginral Jackson."

"Then," said Tad, "they're frien's o' mine, sartin. Sit down, boys, an' I'll git yeh suthin hot in no time."

The "boys," divesting themselves of their arms, accepted the invitation of Tad, who started to prepare the "suthin hot" for his guests. While he is doing so, let us take a glance at a man with whom we are to be better acquainted—"Tennessee." He was truly a giant in form, though, unlike most large men, there was a flexibility about him which gave a nervous appearance to his movements. He was about forty years of age, with long, yellowish hair and beard, large, innocent-looking blue eyes, and a strong, yet kindly expression of the whole face—such a man as children, dogs, and horses would approach without fear. While Tad was at work, Tennessee sat before the fire stroking his long beard and spitting energetically into the heap of glowing coals. He looked as innocent as a great Newfoundland, yet he was the man on whose judgment and fidelity the fate of armies subsequently depended.

"Do yeh know Mr. Anderson?" asked Tennessee, directing his query to Robert.

"I met him this evening, and it was by his advice that we left Marshall."

"Wall, I know'd him in Austin. An' I met him agin yesterday—it's after midnight now." The last clause was inserted to justify his saying "yesterday." Then he went on, "We saw them fellers a powwowing about you'uns. Mr. Anderson told me 'twas all a lie about yer killen' any one, only in defense, and he told

me yeh went in on Ginral Jackson. He says to me, ‘Tennessee’—they calls me ‘Tennessee’ coz I’m from that State—‘Tennessee, yeh mus’ go with them fellers, if they chase Warren, an’ put them on the wrong track, if yeh kin, an’ if yeh can’t, why, do what’s right.’ I told him, by thunder I would. I wanted to git them out on the Caddo Lake road, but Rose ain’t very dull. He ’spected to have a big pull if he got yeh.”

“But how did you manage to get your horse so as to catch up with us, after I loosed the animals?”

In reply Tennessee said: “Thar wuz one hoss yeh didn’t loose, cuz I wuz on his back before yeh got near the others. I saw yer whole plan to wunst, an’ I ’spected a devil of a fight, but the whole thing ended bully,” and Tennessee closed with a low, chuckling laugh.

Robert told Tennessee of his position by the tree, and the conversation which he overheard near the fire, which convinced him that Tennessee was a friend. “I intended, however, after getting on the road, to give my enemies a long chase by keeping to the right.”

“That seemed natral, as it wuz the line yeh’ve got to take bimeby; but if yeh had, ye’d a got inter the all-firdest trap by runnin’ slap agin’ the crowd comin’ back on the road. But now we ’uns is all har safe, an’ to keep so, we musn’t be har long.”

Tad here ended the conversation by handing a tin cup to each man, and then filling it with a steaming potion from a brown earthen pitcher. Tad, who was really a younger man than Tennessee, called the fluid “hot stuff, mighty good fur the sperrits.” After all had drank, with the customary “Good health,”

"Here's at yeh," and "How," Tad proceeded to prepare a bed for his visitors. He took from a rack a pile of buffalo and deer skins, and spread them in layers till they formed a bed which a prince might envy. He then threw an armful to Archy, saying: "Take them, ole feller, an' make yersel' a nest in the corner."

"Tank yeh, mausser, I reckon I kin sleep like a alligator anywhar after drinkin' dat 'hot stuff.' "

"Are you sure, my friend," asked Gaines, as he was about to lie down, "that we are safe here? for if so, I will take off my clothes for a good sleep."

"Yer as safe, ole boy, as if yeh wuz in yer own mother's house," answered Tennessee; and with this consoling information, the two fugitives sank to rest, while Tennessee and Tad retired to a small room at the end of the cabin, from which the sound of heavy breating soon came, and peace reigned in the realm of danger.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAKES.

In Caddo Parish, in northwestern Louisiana, which borders on Texas, there is a large cluster of freshwater lakes and deep bayous, that wind in the most tortuous manner through the rich low lands of that section. Some of the bayous return again into their sources, if such the lakes that receive them can be called.

Along some of the bayous there are many fine cotton plantations, but the greater portion of the lake region is in its primitive state. Wild ducks by thousands swim in peace on the calm waters, unnoticed by the hunter, who watches for the bear, or waits at evening by the shores for the watering of the antlered buck. Swans by thousands float there undisturbed, and from the shallow shores the shrill cry of the heron reverberates through the bordering cypress groves. There is an air of melancholy, of almost utter loneliness about these lakes, and the effect is increased by the long grey moss which like funeral plumes hangs from the trees. There is nothing picturesque, in the ordinary acception of that word, about the Caddo Lakes, and the log-like alligators, swimming along the muddy shores, add not to its beauty. In the hunting season, the lake region is a grand resort for those who

hunt for a living or sport. Then over its waters floats the canoe of the Indian from the north, in its pristine simplicity, while the occupant with poised spear watches for the rising of the black-fish. Then the white trapper, scarcely more elevated than the Indians, frequents the lake to reap a rich and certain harvest of pelts.

Dotted through the lakes are myriads of small islands, covered with a dense undergrowth of cane, and bounded like the shores with wide-spreading cypress-trees. But few of the islands have been trodden by the foot of man. Often, when the Red River, into which the lakes empty, is flooded, the water backs into the lakes, and the islands are submerged to the depth of eight or ten feet. After the flood subsides, the vegetable growth on the rich alluvial deposit is truly wonderful. In the months of September and October immense flocks of birds frequent the islands to feed on the luscious mustang grapes which hang in great bunches from the prolific vines.

The sun had risen on the morning after the arrival of the fugitives at Tad's. That individual was up first, and attended to the horses. Then he returned and awoke Archy, who immediately started the fire, and of his own accord began to prepare the materials for breakfast. The noise soon roused the others, and they rose refreshed from their soft, warm couches. After the morning salutations had passed, Tennessee laid down the plan for the next move of the fugitives in this wise :

“When we've had suthin' to eat, we mus' go to the island an' lay low till them whelps at Marshall has stopped barkin'.”

“Where is the island, and what sort of a place is it?” asked Warren.

“Wail,” replied Tennessee, “’taint much of a place ter brag on. It’s over in Cadder Lake, ’bout six mile from har. I’ve got a shanty over thar, that I use in fisnin’ season. It’s right dry sile, and thar’s lots of feed fúr the critters aroun’ it at this time.”

“But how are we to get over the lake to the islands?” asked Warren, with wondering eyes.

“Oh! the water is shaller; we kin wade over on the critters. We’ve got to go thar, kase its the only safe place. If we stays har, they’ll cotch us, sartin, and then I couldn’t give a chaw of terbaccy for all on us. Over on the island no one never comes, ’cept mysel’. They doesn’t dream thar’s anything thar. When you ’uns have staid a few days, an’ all is quiet, I’ll come an’ start yeh on a clar’ road.”

Both Robert and Gaines determined to place the utmost reliance in their guide, and told him they would do whatever he thought best in the matter.

In the meantime, Archy had shown his director that he needed no information on the subject of cooking, for he piled upon the plates which Tad had set savory heaps of venison steak, fried yams, and boiled black-fish, besides preparing an abundance of aromatic coffee, that would not disgrace a Parisian restaurant. While the four white men were eating, Archy kept their plates covered with an abundance of corn cakes, light and hot from the griddle. After Archy had eaten his breakfast, he went out with Tennessee and Tad to saddle the horses, leaving Robert and Gaines alone.

“I’m afraid,” said Gaines, “this is only the begin-

ning of our troubles. If we ever get to Kentucky, it will be after much trouble."

"We may have a rough time, Gaines, but we will get there all right, depend on it; and then we will laugh at these scrapes we are passing through. Think of what fun we will have, in days to come, when you come to see me and Mrs. Warren, and we tell our wondering wives of the adventures we had bringing the flag back to the Brazos, and, I might add, taking ourselves away."

Gaines could not help laughing at Robert's picture; but his despondency soon returned, and he repeated his old sentiment, that principle, not hope, induced him to keep on.

The conversation was stopped, as Archy approached, leading the horses.

"Mauss Robut, de hosses is fuss rate dis mornin'. Don is skeery as a colt, an' Senor is full ob pitch as a new mustang."

"And how do you feel, Archy?"

"I feel, Mauss Robut, as if de good Lor' held us in de holler ob his hand, an' was a watchin' behin' de clouds, sayin', 'I'le keer for yeh.'"

"There, Gaines, if you want any consolation, consult Archy, he is always ready."

"Yes, Archy has always a consolation."

Tennessee and Tad here interrupted the conversation, as they appeared with two bags filled with meat, coffee, meal, and other necessaries; besides this, Tad strapped two buffalo robes to the saddles of his guests, and begged them to let Tennessee know if they wanted anything else he had, after they got to the island, and he would send it to them at once.

Robert thanked Tad heartily for his kindness, and offered to pay him, but the generous fellow would not listen to it, so, bidding him good-bye, they mounted their horses and followed Tad to the lake.

After an hour's riding they reached the cane-brake along the shore, and pushing through, they were soon wading between the cypress trees that grow up for some distance in the lake. The water grew deeper till it covered the back of Tennessee's mustang, but the hardy little creature, with an ambition that would do credit to a larger horse, pushed boldly in the advance. After wading for an hour, they passed through the cypress trees, and came to the margin of the island, and entered an open field of deep rich grass. On the farther side of the field was the log cabin of Tennessee, which was soon reached, and the animals permitted to roll on the grass.

"This yer's not jist a beautiful place," said Tennessee, "but ye'll find plenty fur the critters, an' yeh kin live on yer rifles like Cherokee chiefs. After I get yeh fixed, I'm goin' back ter Marshall and fine out what that cuss, Rose, is a doin'. I mayn't be back for two days. I've got to see my ole woman an' the young un's, so's to get 'em ready to live alone in case I've got to clar out, which I don't keer to do, 'less it gits dangerous."

On entering the cabin they found it more comfortable than its outside appearance indicated. The walls were chinked and the floor was made of rough-hewn, closely-fitted cypress slabs. In the walls great pegs were driven, from which hung the fishing tackle and hunting traps of Tennessee. A huge fire-place occupied one end of the shanty, on the hearth of

which Archy had soon a blazing fire. A few primitive cooking utensils were pointed out by Tennessee, and after telling them where to procure water and the best points for game, he resaddled his mustang, and giving each a warm grasp of the hand, repeated his pledge to return. Then, slinging his rifle over his shoulder, he sprang into the saddle, and was soon lost to sight 'mid the cane-brake and the cypress groves.

CHAPTER IX.

TAD'S CABIN BURNED.

As Tennessee rode away from the island, the full danger of his position dawned upon him. Before this adventure, the secessionists of Marshall had looked upon him with suspicion; now their suspicions would be confirmed, and their hate increased. He must get away as soon as possible, for to remain now would be to seek death. Of course he would have to see his wife and children. He lived in a thickly-settled part of the town, and could not get home without being seen. Rose was watching for him, no doubt. He knew Rose was afraid of him; but he had lots of backing. It might be best to send Tad into Marshall and acquaint his wife with his determination to start for Tennessee. There was no use in getting into danger without a show, though it would be gratifying to take a shot at that scoundrel, Rose.

Acting on the wisest suggestion that came to his mind, Tennessee retraced his trail to Tad's cabin, which he reached early in the afternoon; that is, he reached the place where Tad's cabin had been that morning. The still smoldering ruins told the fate of the place. Not a log of the cabin or shed or fence was left to tell there had once been a hospitable little

home there. There were blood marks on the ground leading to the river. Tennessee, with a beating heart, traced them to the water's edge, and found lodged against a snag the body of Rose's horse. Tad had fought, that was certain. He must have seen the enemy before they crossed the river, and given fight. Tad could do that, but what was the noble fellow's fate? Tennessee refused to answer the question he had raised, but he hoped the best, for if coolness, courage, strength, swiftness of foot, and a knowledge of the country would avail, Tad would turn up all right.

Tennessee turned away from the ruin, and crossing the river at another point, he plunged into the woods, and, with no trail to guide him, he struck a bee-line for Marshall. Before dark he rested in a strip of woods within sight of the town, and examined and reloaded his arms. He took off his long boots, replacing them with a pair of moccasins, then fastened a buckskin band around his head, and threw his heavy flaxen hair behind his ears.

"Gus, ole boy," he said kindly, addressing his horse, "I reckon yeh'll have to stay here alone. Maybe I won't see yeh no more, an' maybe yeh'll have ter do some tall runnin' to-night. But yer a good ole fel, sartin. Thar's no better hoss in these diggins than you, Gus." This was said while taking off the saddle and bridle. "Graze roun' here till to-night, an' if I don't come back afore mornin', Gus, yer a free nigger. Thar, go!"

Gus walked off a few steps, lay down against a little knoll, as horses always do, and tried to roll up it. He made several able but unsuccessful attempts, then

giving the job up as impracticable, he soon shook himself, rubbed his nose against his master's arm, and, like a sensible horse, went to feeding.

Placing his equipments where he could find them readily, under cover of the darkness, Tennessee, with the cautious step of a deer stalker, walked toward the town. He was within ten yards of his own little house, so far unobserved, and his heart began to throb with anxiety. Suddenly a number of men sprang to their feet around him with savage yells, while high above all the voice of Rose was heard shouting—

“Thar he is, cuss him! Shoot him! cut him to pieces!”

Tennessee struck the nearest man to him to the ground with his clubbed rifle, and the others fell back before a second sweep.

“Don't fire boys, don't fire!” said Rose, it'll bring the rest of the pack here ef yeh do. We can finish him without much noise.”

“Wall now, Rose,” said Tennessee, “if you an' the all-fired skunks aroun' yeh think they're agoin' to chaw me up without a fuss, yeh ain't much on the calculate. By the ghost of General Jackson, if you 'uns come one at a time, I'll fight the whole on yeh.”

Tennessee loosed the flaps of the pistols in his belt and drew himself up to his full height. He had not long to wait, for in a body the whole gang rushed upon him with uplifted weapons and horrible oaths. Tennessee fired his pistols, and then clubbed his rifle, and they gave way before it. He heard a cheer in the distance and was nerved, for he felt friends near at hand. He tried to get back to the house, but a

powerful blow from behind, and a shot from the front, brought him senseless to the ground. His death would have been certain and instant had not the sound of the fight brought out a woman, who bore in her hand a hatchet. She rushed to the place where the fallen man lay bleeding, and with a terrible blow felled Rose to the ground, and then standing over the body of Tennessee, she shouted her hate and defiance of the cowards who had tried to kill her husband.

The arrival of a large body of more peacefully inclined citizens stopped further bloodshed, though, to appease the anger of the mob, as well as to satisfy the apparent justice of the charge that Tennessee had killed a man the previous evening, he was carefully guarded to prison, notwithstanding there was no necessity of guarding an unconscious man who had to be carried to the jail.

Tennessee's wife begged to stay with her husband, but her prayers were unheeded, and the body was thrown into a dark cell, and the door locked.

Next morning Tennessee awoke as if from a terrible dream. His clothing was fastened to the floor with his clotted blood. His head seemed bursting with pain, and his hair was stiff, and sore to the touch. One arm was swollen and powerless, and a burning thirst seemed to consume him. He could not rise, and while he lay trying to recollect his thoughts, and the incidents of the previous evening, a man came in with some bread and water, and promised to bring a doctor to see the prisoner in the course of the morning. After taking a long cooling drink, Tennessee felt stronger, and sitting up he poured the rest of the water on his head

and face, and it gave him new strength. He rose and struggled to the little window, through the iron bars of which the dim grey light shone, and the damp chilling wind blew.

He looked out, and in an instant he seemed to grow faint, and with his sound arm he clutched at a bar for support.

“My God!” he cried in a voice of intense agony, “Its rainin’, its rainin’! Oh the flood, the flood, an’ the island!”

He felt a swimming sensation in his head, and fell fainting to the floor.

His cry brought in the jailor, and with the assistance of a kind-hearted doctor, who arrived shortly after, Tennessee’s bruises were washed, and he was restored to consciousness. He had hardly opened his eyes, when he asked :

“Has the rain stopped, or is it rainin’, or is it my head?”

“It is raining, Tennessee,” said the jailor. “I reckon we’re in for the flood, sure enough.”

The wounded man sprang to his feet, and looked out through the bars, and he saw the rain coming down in torrents, and heard it beating against the prison wall. His face was deathly pale, and he turned to the jailor.

“Mr. Roberts, for God’s sake let me out for eight hours, an’ I’ll come back, and let yeh hang me, if yeh want ter. Let me out! Thar’s three men on an island in the lakes; I took them thar. Oh, God! let me out, or they’ll be drownded! Roberts, let me go! I’ll keep my word, true as Heaven. I’ll come back.”

“I can’t let you go, Tennessee. It ain’t in my

power. And if the three men are those fellers that Rose chased, why, if they're drowned, it'll save their bein' hanged."

"You must let me go. By the eternal, ten thousand men can't keep me back!"

Tennessee's eyes glowed as he sprang to the door. Roberts tried to stop him, but he rushed past him. The doctor fled at the first sight of Tennessee's eyes, and called loudly for help. Tennessee got down to the yard. He saw a man before him with a gun, and he heard him cry, "Stop!" but did not heed him. His wound started bleeding, the blood blinded him, and as he rushed madly for the gate, the guard struck him, and he fell.

When Tennessee recovered he was back in his cell, with chains upon his legs, and a man standing at the cell door with a gun in his hand. He rose and looked out. The rain was still pouring down as if it would never cease. There he stood for hours, and every drop against the bars sunk into his heart like molten iron. He felt the room growing hot, and the veins in his neck swelling. He opened his shirt collar, and gasped for breath. Then he seized the bar again and shook it. It seemed loose, and a thrill of joy ran through him, as, with a madman's strength, he tore it from its socket, and then seized another; but before he could do more, he was seized from behind, and his hands fastened to the chain which bound his legs. He sat on the floor listening to the cruel rain against the bars, and muttering, "The flood, the flood!"

Night came, and still the chained man sat on the floor, and the armed man watched outside the cell.

"I'm not a traitor. I didn't deceive yeh; 'fore

God, I meant to help yeh.” Tennessee was raving. “Don’t cuss me so. - I’d die, to save yeh. I’d let the wolves eat my heart out if I could get yeh off! I see the water is gittin’ higher. It’s up to yer throats, and the island’s flooded! Thar, the hosses is swimmin’, an’ the men’s holdin onter the shanty logs! How dark it is! They can’t stan’ that long. Oh, God, let me die now, so I kin tell ’em up thar it wasn’t my blame!”

The strong man groaned and swayed himself on the floor. His mutterings grew less distinct as the night waned. He imagined he saw the alligators eating the bodies of the fugitives, and the buzzards perched on the dead horses.

Tennessee suffered with a brain fever and his wounds for three weeks. When he recovered he was but a shadow of his former self. His beard and hair had been cut off, his blue eyes were sunken in his head, and his sallow skin was drawn like parchment over his once powerful frame.

After he was restored to consciousness, his wife and children were permitted to see him, and at their first interview even the jailor, whose heart was not the tenderest, was melted to tears. Tennessee’s wife was permitted to visit him every day, till he got strong enough for trial; and that judicial farce was the same in the case of Tennessee as in that of hundreds who were sacrificed that spring in Texas.

Six others were tried with him, accused of every crime, and found guilty of but one—treason to the confederacy. People grew as familiar with the sentence of death as in the reign of terror in France.

Many of those condemned at Marshall, as in other

parts of Texas, died with their own hands, rather than be executed on the gallows. Tennessee's wife, who was permitted to see her husband the day after his sentence, and two days before the time set apart for his execution, proposed to bring him laudanum, thinking, in heart, it would be better for her husband to die by his own hands; but the brave fellow replied:

"Bet, yeh means right, I know; and I'm sure, ole gal, yeh'd peg out yersel' to save me; but I can't do this."

"Yes, Jim, I'd give my heart's blood to keep yeh livin' a day, for God knows what I'll do when yeh're gone. But others do it, Jim; an' I don't want the young un's, when they grow up, to have it said their dad wuz hung," said Tennessee's wife.

"You bet," replied Tennessee, "and I don't want it cas' up ter the young 'uns that their dad wuz a coward. I know, Bet, other fel's have tuk laudnum, but d—d if it ain't a sneakin' way of gittin' rid of trouble. Then, Bet, I want yeh to keep the young 'uns posted about another worl'. I've thought rite smart 'bout it uv late, an' if I've got ter die, fact is, I don't want the Great Mausser to boost me fur killin' mysel'."

Bet held down her head and clasped her strong, coarse hands before her, but uttered no groan or sob. For several minutes there was a solemn silence in the condemned man's cell; then slowly she raised her head, and looking into her husband's eyes with a wild earnestness, she said in a strong whisper:

"Jim, ain't it wuth while ter try gittin' off? Yeh know yeh did that once when the 'Rapahoes had jest got ready to kill yeh."

"Now, ole woman, yer head's gittin' level," said Tennessee, with a genuine smile. "That's the idea. Why, yeh knows, Bet, I ain't one of them fellers as jist gins out. When I git like that, yeh may bet yer pile thar wont be no use tryin'."

"Wall, Jim, I wuz a loon not ter see that. Now, have yeh any plan, an' kin I help yeh? Say yes, an' don't count my risk."

"Wall, I reckon yeh kin do purty near all. Yeh got my saddle an' things all right, an' foun' Gus?"

"Yes."

"Wall, that's good. Now, Sam Baker an' Joe Thompson an' me has things fixed to bust this shanty to-morrow night, 'bout twelve. I'll git out, or die tryin', that's fixed. Now, Bet, yeh mus' have Gus an' all my traps, rifle and knife, at Diller's Run. An' yeh mus' git two more hosses. Tell Alick Taylor all 'bout it, an' he'll help yeh. An', ole gal, hang on thar till day, if I don't come."

Bet promised to do this, and was about to leave, as the jailor appeared, when she asked Tennessee if she could do anything more for him: "Yes, Bet, ole gal, as I've only short time to live, bring the young 'uns to see me to-morrow—little Bet, and the Ginral, and Cap May. The young un's are hard to beat, Bet; an' I want the boys to see—their father ain't a coward."

CHAPTER X.

ON THE ISLAND.

In this story there is no plot ; it proposes to be simply a narrative of a genuine hero, well known to the writer. But it is found necessary, in order to keep before the reader those persons in whom he or she may be interested, to vary the chapters by giving the cotemporaneous incidents in the life of each at this time.

After Tennessee had left the island, the fugitives for a time were interested in the novelty of their situation, and they were busy in their efforts to make the cabin as comfortable as possible. Archy had a born genius for cooking and making a few simple articles of food seem a bountiful variety. While Robert and Gaines were fixing places for their beds, and cleaning their arms, a dinner was being prepared in keeping with the keen appetites of all.

After dinner, Robert and Gaines wrote letters to the dear ones at home ; not that there appeared to be at the time the faintest hope of their ever reaching those for whom they were penned—indeed, both men felt very sure the letters would never be mailed—yet, on the gloomy island, shut out from the world, the impulse to write was strong. There are times in every

life when the heart is full of joy or sorrow, and when the whispering of our feelings to a friendly ear, or the penning of them to a distant friend, eases the burdened soul. Though friends may not hear us, it is a pleasure to whisper to ourselves what we would say were they near; and though they never read what may be written, it rests the heart to write what we would have them read.

Toward evening Robert and Gaines shouldered their rifles, and leaving Archy to watch the horses, they strolled to the point where Tennessee thought they might find game. They were successful in killing a number of ducks and other birds, and in obtaining a better knowledge of the island. At its highest point it was not four feet above the present lake level, and a slight rise in the waters would not only submerge the island, but also the opposite shores of the lake, equally flat, and convert two hundred square miles of country, ordinarily dry, into a shallow, muddy lake, across which no animal could wade. Robert Warren felt the danger of his position, and at the same time he did not blame himself for being there, nor doubt for an instant the fidelity of Tennessee.

Gaines appeared cast down, and as they returned to the cabin his eyes were often raised to the sky, over which clouds, black and threatening, began to gather. Entering the cabin they found Archy singing and cheerfully preparing the evening meal.

By 8 o'clock it was pitchy dark, and a low, wailing sound came down from the cypress boughs. Robert opened the door, and taking a torch went out to see if the horses were all right, for they had been tramping restlessly, and tugging at their lariats. By the

dim light of the torch he could see the cypress boughs above the cabin waving, although no air appeared to be stirring, and the long, grey moss, pendent from the branches, swayed back and forth like weird plumes. The dismal effect was increased as at times the shrill scream of a heron came up from the gloomy shores. Robert returned to the cabin, where a huge fire was burning, before which Gaines and Archy were silently sitting. Taking a seat between them, he assumed a cheerful tone, and said :

“We ought to be thankful for having shelter over our heads to-night, for we will have a gulf squall, which won't last long, but they are unpleasant to be out in, nevertheless.”

“I don't like our position, Robert,” said Gaines, raising his head from between his hands. “This is the flood season, and the waters may rise at any hour. Supposing we were to perish on this island, who would ever know the fact, beyond the man who brought us here, or his partner, Tad?”

“Mauss Andy, said Archy, ceasing to make figures in the ashes with the wooden poker, “de good Lor' would know it. He watches ober us, an' will protec' us wid His mighty arms. An' I don't tink, nohow, He fotched us har to be drowned.”

“That may be, Archy,” replied Gaines, “but God has often seen fit to place better men in worse positions.”

“Yes, Mauss Andy, an' He fotched de chillen from de fiery furnace, jes' as if thar'd been no fiah thar.”

“Well, Archy, I think it will require a similar miracle to save us.”

Robert started up and again looked out, remarking as he did :

“I don’t think that man Tennessee would have brought us here if there were any immediate danger from the flood. He knows the country, and he is not so far distant that he could not return in a few hours, if he thought we were not safe.”

As Robert gazed out his words for the moment falsified his fears.

“That man may be honest, Robert,” said Gaines, “and he may not. If a scoundrel, why has he trapped us? and we are as safely caged as if ten thousand men were guarding us.”

“Well, Gaines, all that is possible,” said Robert, “and if true, that man Tennessee is a paradox, and I cannot conceive such a contradiction.” Then with more emphasis he continued, “I will not permit myself to believe it; even though we perish on this island, I will still believe Tennessee faithful to us.”

“Nebber yeh feah, Mauss Robut, we’s e a comin’ out right. Why, Mauss Tennessee’ll come back bimeby, an’ larf at us fur ’spectin’ him.”

Again the three men gathered around the fire, while louder and louder came the wailing from the cypress boughs, and at times a pattering could be heard on the clap-boards overhead, and the restless tramping of the horses outside. Archy broke the silence in the cabin by singing in a voice of peculiar sweetness one of those religious songs so often heard among the negroes on southern plantations. When he had finished, the two white men rose and together stretched themselves on the bed they had prepared in the corner, and despite the screeching of the winds they were soon sleeping soundly.

Archy still sat by the fire, resting his face between

his hands, and thinking of the little cabin far away in Gonzelletta. His lips moved as if praying, and at times the words came in whispers, "Heah de prayer, Lor', heah de prayer! Oh, sabe Mauss Robut! Good Lor', sabe him." So till midnight he sat; till the winds grew hoarse with their wailing and roared in anger around the cabin. Archy was about to lie down, but suddenly the wind stopped as if for rest. The sleepers grew restless under the stillness, and outside the horses crowded together as if to shelter each other from the coming storm. So it continued for some twenty minutes. Then came a rushing sound, louder and louder. It rose like a prelude to nature's grandest opera, the coming storm. A flash lit up the cabin for an instant; then, as if a signal to commence, a sharp, stirring report belched out. A moment, and along the sky ran the rattle as if from lines of giant musketry. Deeper and thicker came the firing; but it seemed like a skirmish line compared to the deep reverberations that followed. The thunder ceased. Then came a gust of wind that shook the cabin—an instant of ominous stillness—a rushing sound—then down in torrents poured the loosened waters.

The sleepers started wildly up. Gaines's face was the picture of terror, and Warren's thin lips were pale and compressed. Robert opened the door and looked out in the direction of the horses. It was but for an instant; then with all his strength he pushed it to, and fastened it with a peg, while a shudder ran through him.

"This is terrible," he said, as he pulled on his boots, and directed Archy to throw some wood on the

fire. The additional fuel was of no avail. Through the wide-topped chimney the rain came down, and soon extinguished the fire and filled the darkened cabin with steam. Here and there a pattering could be heard on the floor, where the water came through the frail roof. The three men crept close together, and anxiously waited for the tardy light.

It is said that in the afternoon at Waterloo, when the sweeping masses of the French went surging around and grinding down the stubborn squares of "England's Iron Duke," he often looked up at the slow sun, and prayed it might go down, or Blucher come to the rescue. With as much anxiety did Robert Warren count the slow, black minutes, and pray for the breaking of day or the ceasing of the storm.

Morning at last dawned, but brought with it no cessation of the rain. The cabin was leaking at every seam, and every article in it was soaked with water. The Mexican blankets of the fugitives kept them dry in part. They had no food cooked, and no means of cooking any, which fact did not add to the comfort of their situation.

"We must leave this place immediately," said Robert. "If we are to go down, we must do so resisting fate."

"Mus' I saddle up at once, Mauss Robert?" asked Archy, anticipating his master's order.

"Yes, as quickly as you can. Mr. Gaines and I will bundle up the traps inside." Turning to Gaines, Robert asked if he thought he could retrace his course of the previous day across the lake.

"No, I cannot," said Gaines, "for I did not look back to notice, when we reached this side, a landmark."

"Well, I did," said Robert, "and I think I can make the exact point on the opposite shore where we entered the lake."

In a short time the horses were ready, and the men were riding away from the cabin. The island had become so thoroughly soaked that the horses sank to their knees at every step, and stumbled through mud-holes that would have swamped less spirited animals. They passed through the margin of the canebrake, and, with Robert ahead, they were soon wading among the cypress trees, and steering clear of the floating logs that beset their course. They had gone about five hundred yards, beyond the tree line, when suddenly Robert's horse descended, and with wild struggles was plunging through the deep water. Before him for two miles stretched the lake, too deep to wade and too wide to swim. To attempt it would be madness, so he turned his horse and shouted, "Get back! get back! We can't make it." And back to the cabin they retraced their steps.

They took the horses inside with them, and all day they stood praying for the rain to cease, but with a steady fury it continued, and a second cheerless night came to the fugitives.

Slowly the hours rolled by, bringing no abatement to the storm. A second morning struggled through the gloom, and disclosed the flood sweeping around the cabin, and the green field converted into a turbid lake.

"What shall we do?" asked Gaines in a tremulous voice, after they had surveyed their position in silence.

"We must do," replied Robert, "what you and I have often done before on the Brazos—make a raft.

There is plenty of material here. We can construct one to float ourselves and hold up the horses' heads, in case they give out."

"That may be. But, Robert, where can we go to? The whole country is flooded. The horses are too much exhausted to swim far, and we are too nearly played out to do much controlling of the raft."

"That is all true, Gaines, but it is our only plan. If the horses die, we can cut them loose; and if we get too much exhausted to work the raft, we must trust to Providence and the current to take us somewhere in safety."

There was no objection to this plan, so the men were soon at work on the raft.

They tore down the cabin, and with Tennessee's seine ropes fastened the logs together. They then tore up the floor and nailed the cypress slabs composing it over the logs. Three stakes were fastened, about two feet apart, at the end of the raft, to which they could attach the horses. After preparing the raft and placing all their equipments on it, Archy waded out to the timber and cut a couple of long poles with which to guide the raft.

Everything being ready, the horses were made fast, and the three men sat down on the raft to wait for a greater depth of water to float them. By noon the water was sufficiently high, and the raft was guided out to the canebrake. Through the cypress trees they floated, and as the water deepened the ropes by which the horses were fastened were made shorter. Out further, and the horses were beyond their depth, and with explosive breathings and dilated nostrils they swam close to the raft, as if they would force

themselves on it. The poles, however, still touched bottom, and Robert and his servant used them while Gaines kept the horses close to the raft and attended to their fastenings.

They floated with the open lake, the rain still pouring down, and night approaching. The poles no longer touched bottom; they used them for paddles, and the distant shore seemed washing away before them. The exertions of the horses lessened, and Gaines's, without an effort, permitted himself to be towed behind. Slowly they moved, quickly the light lessened, and a third black, dreary night came to the famishing men, to increase the horror of their situation.

It might have been two hours after the darkness came—it seemed an age—when the raft struck against a tree, then slowly swung past. Another and another bump, and they were going through the cypress trees, that should denote a neighboring shore. A short distance further and they felt the raft moving over masses of yielding cane. The men at the poles worked with renewed strength. Two of the horses with labored efforts waded behind. The raft struck some soft substance with a dull thug. Archy turned and drove his pole into a bank of clay, and with a shout of joy he called out:

“Bress de good Lor’! Bress Heaven, we’s saved!”

Jumping on shore he quickly made fast the raft, while Robert and Gaines unfastened the horses. Two of them staggered up the bank, but the wiry mustang of Gaines, which had borne him so often and faithfully on the southern prairies, sank cold and dead when they loosed his rope.

CHAPTER XI.

SAVED, AND YET LOST.

The breeding of a horse is tested, not by momentary strength or swiftness, but by the power of endurance. The thorough-breds of Warren and his servant lived where other horses would have died. The expressions of love which Archy lavished on the noble creatures, as they stood on the muddy bank, the water dripping from their sleek sides, showed how he appreciated their efforts, and what a loss their death would have been to him.

After resting the horses a short time, and making the raft fast so that they might return to it if necessary, they strapped their saddle-bags, with Gaines's equipments, on the two animals, and started out through the darkness. The men were thoroughly exhausted, but there was no place for rest. They were as ignorant of their whereabouts as if they had been suddenly dropped on an unknown planet. They might be running into the very jaws of danger, but even that was preferable to the horrors of the lake. Through the dark woods and the damp pendent moss, over logs and under vines they walked, straining their eyes through the darkness, hoping for a light. They had struggled on in this way for some time, when sud

denly they ran against a fence, and this unexpected obstacle was hailed with delight. Letting it down, they entered a newly-plowed field, and after rising a slight ascent a few hundred yards beyond, their eyes were gladdened by the faint glimmering of a distant light. They pushed on, their weary limbs infused with a new strength, and in a short time reached another fence, which they let down, taking care to put it up after passing through. A little distance beyond they found that the light came from one of an extensive group of negro cabins. Robert rapped at the door, and on its being opened he found a sick black man lying in one corner, with a doctor in attendance, whose large, frank face bespoke a generous heart.

To him they made known their condition; they had lost their way; they were wet, cold, and hungry, and wanted food and rest. Never did a stranger make such an appeal to a southern man without meeting with a warm response.

The doctor told them they were at Bastrop's plantation, three miles and a half from the lake, and northwest of Shreveport.

"I supposed that was our location as we passed Shreveport," said Robert; "but I must say, I cannot place myself with relation to Marshall."

"Why," said the doctor in surprise, "you were not surely going to Marshall? Is it forty miles from here as the crow flies, and in the present condition of the roads you would have to go over twice that distance to reach it."

"No, I left Marshall some days ago, and after passing Shreveport I pushed out on the Monroe road.

I hoped to reach some tavern by dark, but so far without success. Important business calls me to Kentucky, and I am anxious to push through as fast as possible."

"Well, you are but a short distance off the direct road. But let us go to the house; Mr. Bastrop has not yet retired, and I can say for him that he will be right glad to see you, and extend to you his hospitality."

On reaching the house they found that the family had not yet retired. Mr. Bastrop, an elderly and somewhat pompous man, with a fine form and a genial face, received the strangers with marked kindness. He gave directions, even before he learned the condition of the fugitives, to have their horses attended to and supper prepared. Nor did the thoughtful gentleman forget Archy, for, seeing that the black man looked fatigued, he ordered a servant to take charge of him, and see that he had food and rest. Then accompanying Robert and Gaines to a room, he provided them with dry clothing, and after a refreshing wash, the two men returned to the supper room, where they found a warm meal awaiting them.

Mr. Bastrop, after Robert had given him a short, but by no means inaccurate account of the circumstances that led them to his house, evidenced a desire to talk, but noticing the really exhausted condition of his guests, he turned to the doctor and said:

"Our friends are weary, I see. Now, doctor, I am sure they need prescribing for; I will have them shown to their rooms and we can consult over their cases alone."

Lights were quickly provided, and Robert and Gaines followed the servant to their comfortable beds. It was a luxury, after sixty hours of work, and wet, and hunger, and anxiety, to lie down between clean sheets, on a soft bed, and listen without a dread to the patter, patter, patter, of the ceaseless rain which a few hours before sounded like a death-call.

Robert straightened out in the bed and gave a great sigh of relief, at the same time that a servant knocked at the door, and being told to "come in," he entered bearing a small silver waiter, around which hovered a veil-like vapor, and a delicious aroma. There was a glass with a spoon in it, and sundry yellow particles floating on the surface.

"Mausser," said the servant, showing his white teeth, "Mauss Jack an de doctah sends dis wid dere compelmments, an says it am de medicine, an' it ain't no good 'cept yeh drink it hot."

Robert raised the glass and took a long draught. There was something about the taste not unlike Tad's "suthin hot," only in a more refined way. The medicine was taken. Robert drew the warm covering around him; a gentle perspiration broke from every pore, and deep, refreshing sleep came to make him forgetful of his lately perilous situation.

How long he would have slept is doubtful had not a servant awoke him about daylight, and, according to the charming custom of the country, presented him a cup of delicious coffee. He drank it, and a soft, dreamy sleep followed, that lasted till nine o'clock.

Robert rose of his own accord, feeling like a new man, and on descending he found breakfast waiting him. Gaines was still asleep, and Mr. Bastrop, in

answer to Robert's suggestion to wake him, said, "No; the poor fellow is tired; let him sleep as long as he chooses."

Mr. Bastrop then introduced Robert to his wife and daughters, and proceeded to breakfast. During the meal he said:

"Mr. Warren, your name is very familiar to me. May I inquire where you came from?"

"Certainly, sir," replied Robert. "My father and his immediate family live in southern Texas, and I am on my way to Kentucky to visit an uncle who resides there."

"Is your father's first name Robert, and did he come originally from South Carolina?"

"You have hit his name, sir; and he is a South Carolinian by birth," said Robert, looking up in surprise.

"Then," said Mr. Bastrop, seizing Robert's hand across the table, "your father and I were college chums, and sworn friends in days gone past. Why," continued Mr. Bastrop, with increased warmth, "I am delighted to have a son of Bob Warren under my roof, and I hope to be able to keep him here till he wearies of his father's friend."

Robert looked and spoke his thanks, but told Mr. Bastrop that he regretted he would have to leave as soon as his friend and servant were recruited and the horses rested.

"Yes, Mr. Warren, you have all your father's energy, and look like him, too; don't you think so, Mollie," addressing the daughter who sat near him.

Miss Mollie, who had never seen the father, and had only stolen a glance at the son, blushed as she replied:

"It must be so, papa, though I regret I never met Mr. Warren's father."

"Yes, to be sure. But, wife, you have," and Mr. Bastrop turned to his wife, who, taking a pleasant look at Mr. Warren, corroborated her husband's view.

"Well," continued Mr. Bastrop, "you will not think of leaving under a week, for, depend upon it, Mr. Warren, you will need all your vigor in the coming war for southern rights." Mr. Bastrop looked at Robert, who was busy with some dish before him, and went on: "Of course, I need not ask your father's son on which side his sympathies are. Though I must say, Robert Warren was never a Calhoun man, nor, indeed, was I, though we both see now that the great South Carolinian was right."

"You have not mistaken the feelings of my father nor myself in this matter, Mr. Bastrop, so far as southern rights are concerned; but we both question the wisdom of secession. I think it would be easier to battle for our rights in the Union as statesmen, than to attempt a forced recognition of them by the bayonet."

"I did not favor the movement of South Carolina myself. But we are in for it. However, I do not anticipate trouble. There will be no war, Mr. Warren. Say what we may about the Yankees, we cannot deny their shrewdness, and they know full well they would stand no chance before southern gentlemen." As Mr. Bastrop spoke, he straightened up in his chair, and his handsome face glowed with earnestness as he concluded: "As an old man I have been happy till the last few weeks, and now, Mr. Warren,

I would give up everything to be able to take part in the war, if we are to have one."

"I certainly admire your spirit, Mr. Bastrop, and I hope the cause of your unhappiness will soon be shown to be groundless, by having all our rights conceded and all our difficulties peacefully arranged."

Robert kept up this guarded conversation with Mr. Bastrop till nearly noon, when he joined the ladies, whom he found to be elegant and accomplished. Knowing the tenor of the morning's conversation, they delicately dropped it, and Robert Warren was entertained by the brilliant conversation for which the educated southern ladies are remarkable.

A little before dinner Gaines came down, looking like a different man, and showing great surprise when informed of the number of hours he had been asleep.

After dinner, Robert walked out and found that though the sky was still black, it had stopped raining. He saw Archy, who appeared as fresh as ever, and who informed him that the horses were "as smart and dry as if dey'd neber had water 'bove dere hoofs."

Returning to the house he announced to Mr. Bastrop his determination to start immediately on his journey. The kind-hearted gentleman and his amiable family tried to change Robert's mind, but seeing that he was positive, they did everything to make his departure pleasant. He found his clothing clean and dried, and the articles that had been left in his saddlebags washed and nicely folded.

"My friend, Mr. Gaines," said Robert, addressing the kind host, "lost his horse, as I informed you last

evening. We desire to purchase another. Can you tell me, Mr. Bastrop, where we can be accommodated?"

"Buy a horse!" said Mr. Bastrop in surprise. "Bob Warren's son buy a horse from me! I have a great notion to hold on to you till your recent cold chill has wholly left your heart."

Robert laughed as he said: "But, Mr. Bastrop, I did not propose to buy one from you. I will get one at some neighbor's if you will direct me."

It was now Mr. Bastrop's turn to laugh. "Why, my nearest neighbor lives four miles from here, and he has plenty of mules, but no horses, to sell." Then, changing his tone, Mr. Bastrop continued: "Seriously, Mr. Warren, there are a dozen horses in my stables. Let your friend take his choice. And if you have any compunctions about the gift, let me say, that were it not for the aid and advice of your father, I would not be living to-day, and, if living, I would not be worth a cent."

Mr. Bastrop spoke with emotion, and Robert accepted his generous offer.

By three o'clock they bade farewell to the noble planter and his family, and accompanied by a guide whom Mr. Bastrop sent to show them the right road, they were again on their journey north. As they rode along Robert called to mind the many good and noble men who were rushing into the vortex of secession, as sheep follow their leader.

CHAPTER XII.

KENTUCKY.

There was a time, not long distant, when the name "Kentuckian" was a synonym for bravery, patriotism, and hospitality, and no star shone brighter in the galaxy of States than that representing Kentucky. Blessed above every section of the Union in her location and natural advantages, her climate tempered the colder air of the north with the warm winds from the south, to produce an atmosphere healthy and invigorating. Her valleys were deep and rich, and on her thousand hills the finest herds in the country grazed. The productions of her soil were always in demand, and poverty among her sons bespoke in its exception improvidence. School houses and churches were scattered in nearly every section of the State, and the people were famed for their honor and intelligence. True, slavery existed there, but in a form so mild as to give all the advantages of the institution to the negro, without whom the masters would have been better off. But in Kentucky, as in other slave States, the doctrine of State sovereignty had taken a fast hold on the younger portion of the community, who knew nothing of the patriotism of Clay or the inflexibility of Jackson; and to uphold this idea, thousands of Kentucky's best men poured out their

blood against the flag their fathers so bravely defended at New Orleans. Still, she was not ardent in her new love, nor wholly forgetful of the old, for the history of western victories is the record of Kentucky daring. To every sword that she sent to the South, she gave a saber and two muskets to the Union.

When it was seen that war was inevitable, as a State Kentucky occupied no enviable position. Divided in her sentiments and her views of right, she wavered, and while she refused aid to the Union, she tried to make amends by warning the confederate soldiers from her border. Had she acted as South Carolina or Massachusetts did, her veriest enemies would turn with admiration and respect to the State which they now jeer as the type of vacillation and imbecility. Poor Kentucky! her indecision has fully established her claim to the name of "the dark and bloody ground."

Yet she was and is still "the fairest land of all," with her undulating hills, and her green valleys and noble rivers, and homes so indicative of culture and wealth.

Among those homes, set like jewels in the emerald center of the "blue-grass region," there was none happier or more beautiful than that of Louis Warren, of Jessamine, situated in the most fertile part of what they call "the garden spot of the world," embowered in the primitive forest of locust, and walnut, and maple, with here and there a glimpse of the clear Kentucky river, like a mild eye peeping through the openings. Buffalo and deer grazed with nearly their primitive freedom in the grand park surrounding the place. Hedges of Osage orange and the Cherokee

rose sent up their fragrance with the perfume of countless other flowers. How grand, yet cozy, that old house looked, with its stately pillars in front, and its score of angles, nooks, and quaint chimnies, and gables behind, with patches of yellow sunlight floating before it on the lawn, and masses of rich flowers bordering the well-kept walks.

Mr. Warren counted his acres by thousands and his servants by hundreds. He was blessed above most men in wealth, and his children were the crowning glory of his declining years. You might search that land, famous for its noble-looking men, without finding the physical superiors of Allen or Russell Warren. Both were just past the threshold of manhood, and in addition to great prospective wealth and fine persons, they had the advantage of an education in the foremost college of the North.

Mr. Warren had one daughter, in every respect worthy of her father and brothers. She was his youngest child, bright, beautiful, and accomplished; but having lost her mother in early life, and accustomed to having her own way, some might think, who did not understand her warm heart and pure motives, that she was spoiled.

It was the early part of May, 1861. Mr. Warren and his family were sitting on the gallery enjoying the beautiful sunset, which, from their position, could be seen tipping with gold the blue hills in the distance. The young men were chatting together pleasantly, and smoking with the slow, languid puffs peculiar to men who enjoy the weed. Miss Bell was relating some amusing incident to her father, for the old gentleman clapped his hands, and they laughed in chorus, till the

mirth spread to the faces of the brothers, who laughed, though they knew not the cause. A servant rode up the avenue, and, dismounting, handed Mr Warren the mail, just brought in from Nicholasville.

The papers from Cincinnati and Louisville were seized immediately by the three gentlemen. They glanced rapidly over the pages, as if looking for some news in which each was particularly interested. After a few moments, Russell, the younger of the brothers, rose quickly from his seat, and throwing up his hat with boyish impetuosity, shouted out, "Hurrah for Southern rights! Why, see here, Allen, Beauregard has driven every Yankee from South Carolina."

Russell turned to his brother, who never looked up from the paper on which he was intent. His indifference nettled Russell, who said pettishly:

"Allen, I wouldn't be as cold a toad as you for the world. Why don't you help me cheer?"

"Because, Russell," said Allen, looking into his brother's eyes with a pained expression, "I can see nothing to cheer for."

"Nothing to cheer for?" retorted Russell with a glow on his cheek. "Is it nothing when our fellow-countrymen of South Carolina assert their rights?"

"Yes; but, brother," said Allen, slowly, "they assert their rights, as you call it, by driving out our fellow-countrymen who have done them no wrong."

"No wrong," said Russell, in the same excited tone. "Why, Allen, you astound me more and more every day. What has changed you? Has not the North wronged us by placing abolitionists in power, and planning for the ruin of every slaveholder in the South?"

"I don't think so. Neither you nor I have suf-

ferred any wrong. Show me wherein Kentucky or South Carolina has been injured by the people recently elected, and I will cheer as heartily as you at every reverse they meet with."

"Allen, this is simply nonsense. If I know a man is sworn to injury, do you think I am going to wait for him to knock me down before I put myself on the defensive?" asked Russell.

"By no means," replied Allen; "but I would not knock the man down and kick him out on the mere suspicion of his evil designs; and that is what South Carolina has done, to continue your illustration."

"Yes, and I hope Kentucky will come to her senses, and wake from her sleep, and follow the example of South Carolina. I, for one, am ready to fight the fanatics of the North the moment Kentucky decides."

As Russell concluded he walked to the end of the gallery, and, on returning, Allen addressed him without raising his eyes from the paper.

"Brother Russell, the day Kentucky becomes so blind as to decide against the Union, I will be one of her faithful sons to lead her back to the fold, and I say this with the full conviction that blood must be shed to do it."

Russell drew a seat near to his brother, and looked at him with amazement, while Allen continued:

"This appeal to the South is simply the maturing of a plan concocted by ambitious men before we were born, Russell. The North has fairly beaten us in strength and resources; she has elected a President against our wish; now let us submit, as they have done heretofore, and not make our State a wedge to divide the Union."

“That sounds very well as a piece of abstract counsel,” said Russell, assuming a critical air, “but I take it there are statesmen in Kentucky whom you have idolized heretofore, who know more about the necessity for secession than we do, and they hold the same views I entertain. You voted, last fall, for John C. Breckinridge, and I gave him, as you know, the first vote I ever cast.”

Russell looked inquiringly at his brother, and Allen said :

“Yes, that is very true.”

“Well,” continued Russell, “I heard him say, in a speech in Lexington yesterday, that the time had come for Kentucky to take part with her sisters of the South, and he advised the young men to be training, for war would certainly come. A large number of Jessamine County boys were over there, and on our return we organized another company of the State Guard.”

“I am still true to the principles I held when I voted for Breckinridge,” said Allen, “and so far as he advocates the measures you have mentioned, he is false to himself, and unworthy the esteem of every good man.”

“Brother Allen,” said Bell, with pouting lips, “you are a real tease. How can you talk so, when all the young men in the country are for the South. I told George Watson, yesterday, when he talked as you do, that hereafter he must have some other listener, for I would not come near him, and before he left he promised to join the State Guard.”

“Yes, sister, your sex has played the same trick before on better men,” said Allen, in the same calm tone that characterized everything he said.

Mr. Warren sat with anxious face listening to the conversation of his children, but taking no part therein. When Allen had concluded, the old gentleman rose, saying :

“My children, I would prefer to hear no more of this. Let us enter the house, and find some more profitable occupation. It pains me to hear such talk, where we have had love and happiness heretofore.”

On entering the parlor the hot-headed Russell again broke out with :

“Father, you know the South is right, and people must take sides. Now cannot you tell us, for Allen’s benefit, just what you think of the stand he has taken.”

“My boy,” said Mr. Warren, laying his hand on Russell’s shoulder, “I cannot side with either section. I believe the majority of the northern people mean to do right. They are not as fanatical as we suppose, and I cannot think that separation is a remedy for evils, real or imaginary. On the other hand, we must accept things as they are, not as we would have them. A war is imminent, and by blood and interest we are allied to the South.”

“But, father, if this war becomes general, what side would you have Kentucky take?” asked Allen.

“I would have Kentucky stand aloof till the hot blood of each section is cooler, and then step in as a mediator between them.”

“In such a conflict as this, however, positive men must take sides; but one side can be right, and in my opinion the whole country claims the service of the true patriot, in preference to a section. I regret our differences, but I am firmly decided to stand by the Union.”

As Allen said this he did not raise his voice, but it sounded stronger and deeper than his ordinary tones.

"Brother Allen," said Russell, "give me credit for being as honest in my convictions as you are. I am as strong in my feelings for the South as you can be for the Union, and I am willing, if necessary, to give my life blood as a pledge of my fidelity."

"I know you are honest, my Russell," said Allen, rising and clasping the hand of his brother. "I know you are incapable of a mean or dishonorable act, yet I must attribute what I deem your errors to some cause; let me call it thoughtlessness."

Allen turned as he spoke and left the room. Putting on his hat, he walked down through the locust grove, through which glimpses of the moon could be caught, and from which came the delicious perfume of the flowering trees. He walked with his hands behind him and his eyes cast down. He loved his brother dearly as his own life. There was only a few years' difference in their ages, and from childhood they had been companions, as playmates, schoolboys, and college chums. Now he felt there was an estrangement, the first of their lives. It arose from no personal feeling, for Russell was still the same noble, generous boy, loved by all who knew him. Each brother was the representative of antagonistic ideas. Each was positive debate was useless, and one side or the other must yield through other agencies. As Allen strolled back he thought over the possibility of a war, and he pictured himself and brother fighting on opposite sides, and his heart gave a throb, and a pain shot across his forehead. The idea was horrible, and he tried to banish it by increasing his speed

towards the house. On entering, Russell rose, and, placing both arms around his brother's neck, said :

“Alley, old boy, we are just going to settle all our difficulties. Bell and I have decided to challenge you and father to a game of whist. We will represent the sunny South, and you the other side.”

Allen laughed and agreed to it, nor was he sorry when, at a late hour, the sunny South was ahead three games.

CHAPTER XIII.

SPECULATIONS.

In the morning the all-absorbing topic was again introduced by Bell's remarking, at the breakfast table :

"Since the secession of Texas, I have been thinking a great deal about uncle Robert's family. If there is to be a war, cousin Robert may come here to fight."

"Yes, sister," said Russell, "if your old school-mate, cousin Mary, knew how Kentucky was acting, I am sure she would regret having relatives here."

"You take it for granted, then, that uncle Robert's family is opposed to the Union. I have more respect for them than to believe it," interposed Allen quietly.

"That idea about respect, Allen, is a matter of opinion," said Russell. "I would be willing to wager my horse that at this time cousin Robert is raising a squadron of Texas rangers to avenge the wrongs of his State."

"Yes, Texas has been fearfully wronged by Indians and cut-throat desperadoes, in addition to her unprincipled politicians. I hope Robert retains his old hate for the class last named."

Allen said this with a cold smile, that had the effect

of rousing Russell, who poured out a torrent of general invective against Yankees, Puritans, witch-burners, abolitionists, fanatics, negro-stealers, and northern mud-sills.

“Brother Russell,” said Allen, after his brother had exhausted himself, “I have a distinct recollection of having saved you, while at school, from a flogging at the hands of one of those Yankees, for language less strong and more thoughtful than that just uttered. However, we were talking about Texas. You may remember that when Texas was annexed, we took her with all her debts, and desperadoes, and New England helped to pay those debts, that the South might have more slave territory. Texas wronged! Why, as a State, she is the meanest and basest of ingrates, and her secession and the subsequent murders of good men, are in keeping with the character of her leaders.”

“I suppose, brother Allen,” said Bell, “you class uncle Robert’s family with the desperadoes and bad people of Texas.”

“No, Bell, I could not be just and suppose such a thing; and even if they did vote for secession, I would except them from the catalogue, knowing how good they are: just, my sister, as I except you and Russell from the ambitious demagogues and passionate people of the South, with whom you sympathise.” There was a kindly tone in Allen’s voice as he spoke, and as he continued it became lower and softer: “I have not seen cousin Robert for years, but as a boy he bade fair to be a noble man, like his father. Whether for or against the Union, I must respect him, for his motives, I am sure, are right.”

Allen might have continued in this strain, had not his attention been attracted by a tramping of horses outside, followed by the ringing of the door-bell. Soon after, a servant announced two gentlemen in the hall.

“What do they look like, Patsy?” asked Bell, with a woman’s curiosity, as she glanced at the mirror above the mantel-piece.

“Why, Miss, dey’s kinder nice, an’ dey look right smart funny; an’ dey’s got de orfullest beards an’ hats, O Lor’,” and Patsy tried to describe the sombreros by drawing an imaginary circle above her head with both hands extended.

Bell laughed at the queer description, and, as she glanced again at the mirror, directed the servant to show the gentlemen into the parlor.

Patsy returned in a few seconds, and, in a voice indicative of amazement, said:

“O, sakes, Miss Bell, de gentleman says he’s yer cousin, an’ he com’d from Texas.”

Instantly Mr. Warren and his family rose from the table and went to the parlor, and Robert Warren of Texas and his friend Gaines received that warm greeting that a Kentucky gentleman can give when his heart is in sympathy with his words. After the first words of hearty welcome, the thoughtful Allen went to the window, and, looking out for an instant, said:

“I see you have horses—but I might have known that; only imagine a Texan without a horse!”

Going to the door he called to a black man who was working in one of the flower-beds, “Uncle Toby, take the horses to the stable, rub them down well after

you water them, and then see that they are well fed. And, on your way, tell Aunt Phenev to give the boy a good warm breakfast. Do you hear?"

"All right, Mauss Al. I'll see dat de hosses an' de boy's keered fur," said Uncle Toby, as he led the horses to the stable, followed by Archy.

After some minutes spent in inquiring about their mutual families, Bell called to mind the fact that Robert and his friend were just in time for breakfast, and though they had eaten before, they could not resist the temptation to join the family.

While at breakfast Robert apologized for his "outlandish costume," as he was pleased to call his Texan dress. He assured his pretty cousin that he had clothing much more presentable, which he would don after breakfast.

Bell laughed as she assured cousin Robert that he was welcome, no matter what his appearance might be, adding: "I think your present dress romantic and picturesque. It might not look so well, however, on a different looking man."

Robert gracefully acknowledged the compliment of his cousin, and after breakfast he and Gaines left to dress, he promising to return soon and show his cousin "a couple of Texan savages attired in the manufacture of timid Yankees."

After the visitors had withdrawn, Russell, who felt rather sore over the previous conversation, began:

"You see, brother Allen, from the tone of cousin Robert's conversation, he is opposed to the Yankees. Shouldn't wonder if he came on here to raise a company of Kentuckians. Wouldn't he make a dashing soldier! Clear the track, Yankees," and Russell crowed exultingly.

"I beg, Russell," said Mr. Warren, "that you do not draw Robert out on that question. No matter what his views may be, it would be unpleasant for him, as we are so unfortunate as to be radical and opposite."

Allen smiled as he said: "Father, we are not exactly opposite. You split the difference between Russell and myself, by being thoroughly conservative."

Bell walked up behind her father's chair, and drawing back his head she kissed his forehead, saying, as she toyed with his grey hair: "I think my dear, kind father is—let me see—what do you call it, Russell?" Russell suggested "on the fence," and Bell repeated, "Yes, father, you are on the fence—on my side of it, however."

Mr. Warren intended to laugh, from the twitchings of his face, but gradually it grew more serious, and he dropped his head on his breast, as if the remarks of his children had led him to more serious reflection.

Robert and Gaines soon returned, looking like different men in their clean, civilized attire.

"Cousin Robert," said Russell, shortly after Robert came down, "I am going to Nicholasville to attend a drill of a new State Guard company. If you are not too tired to go with me, I can provide you with a horse, such as you never saw on the prairies."

"I thank you very much, and should be pleased to go, were I not so tired," said Robert. "I know something about horses, however, and would like to see this wonderful animal of yours."

They walked out, and Russell pointed out his ele-

gant four-year-old bay, purchased when a colt from the famous stock-raiser, "Lord" Alexander. Robert admired the beautiful creature, pointed out the fine points with his finger, and then said :

"You have a fine horse, cousin Russell, but if you wish to see one that can beat him one hundred and fifty yards in a mile, go to the stable and take a look at one of the horses I brought from the prairies."

You may tell a Kentuckian you are stronger, of better family, and of superior abilities to him, and he may pass your remarks unheeded ; but tell him you have a horse that can leave his behind, and suddenly he flashes up, and is willing to wager his all that you are in error. Russell tried to laugh as he said :

"All you say about your horse is possible, cousin Robert ; but wait till you and your horse are rested, and we will have a rare ride. Now, I must leave you to my good Quaker brother. I'm off for the drill."

Russell finished his last words while vaulting into the saddle, then rode some distance at a walk. He looked back, and seeing that his cousin was watching him, he raised his hat, and giving free rein to his beautiful horse, like an arrow he sped down the long vista, arched by the flowering locusts.

It was indeed a day of rest to Robert. He lounged, smoked, and tried to read, but thoughts of the dear one at home and the memories of the dangers he had encountered to reach Kentucky, haunted him.

In the afternoon Bell sought him out, and proposed a stroll through the grounds, to which he willingly agreed. They sauntered out through the gardens, Bell entertaining her cousin by pointing out her favorite flowers, and drawing him out on the flora of

Texas, in which he was perfectly at home. She spoke about the current literature, and was astonished at her cousin's familiarity with her most read authors. She prattled about a hundred things, trivial they would seem if written; yet a lovely woman can warble them out and be irresistible. Tired at length, she took off her hat, and shaking loose her wealth of jetty curls, she led her cousin to a seat, exclaiming:

"Oh, cousin Robert, you look so brave and strong, that it makes me particularly happy to see you at this time."

"Why, my little cousin, I had no idea that the fact of my being strong would increase your pleasure at seeing me. If I were small and weak, would you not esteem me as highly?" asked Robert.

"Yes, I would esteem you, no matter what you looked like, cousin Robert," said Bell, "but I am sure I would not be so happy to see you just at this time, if you were as small as I am."

"If I were as sweet looking in addition, I think you would, cousin Bell," said Robert. "Now, I am nervous with anxiety to know why you admire my size and strength."

"Because, cousin Robert," said Bell, her face growing serious, "I want strong men to fight. O, we are going to have such an awful war, and fearful times! Russell has joined the State Guard, and nearly all the young men are going to. Brother Allen is a regular Yankee. I'm sorry, for I love him very much. He got angry last night. I could see it in his eyes. And he said, if Kentucky seceded, he would fight her. Don't you think it was wicked to speak so? Say yes, please."

She added the last three words after waiting some time for an answer. But Robert, with his eyes cast on the ground, forgot his cousin in the whirling thoughts which rushed through his brain.

Bell looked inquiringly into his face, and then, in a soft, sweet voice, asked, "Are you ill, cousin Robert? You must be. Come, let us return to the house."

"Yes, cousin, I am sick," and Robert spoke with an emphasis that startled her.

He rose and walked rapidly back, almost forgetting his fair companion. On reaching the house he directed a servant to tell Allen he wished to see him at once.

With a woman's instinct, Bell saw the true state of affairs, and agitated by anger and sorrow, she went to her room, and eased her heart in the great solace of her sex—tears.

In a few minutes Allen entered the room where Robert sat gazing earnestly out of the window, and said: "My stalwart cousin, at your summons; your servant has come to receive his orders." Allen spoke in a playful way, but his manner changed when his eyes met those of Robert, with their strong, stern expression.

"Let us take a walk, Allen," said Robert. "There is a subject on which I am very anxious to speak with you."

Calling Gaines, who now, as heretofore, was using his spare moments in writing to his wife letters which he felt very certain would never reach her, they walked to a rustic arbor some distance from the house, and after being seated, Robert related to Allen the conversation he had just had with his cousin Bell and then he asked:

“Are you truly in favor of the Union, cousin Allen?”

Allen replied: “Without at all knowing how you stand on that question, I will answer your inquiry with the candor with which it was asked. Yes, I am in favor of the Union, and so much so as to lay down my life, if necessary, for it.”

“Give me your hand on that, Mr. Warren,” said Gaines, rising and extending his hand to Allen. The hands were clasped, and Allen knew that his cousin was a Union man.

Robert then related to Allen his reasons for visiting Kentucky. He spoke of the voting in Brazoria, the tearing down of the flag, the assault of Townsend, and the subsequent flight of himself and companions. He showed up the gigantic fraud by which Texas was rushed out of the Union, and the wholesale murder of Union men which followed. He touched but lightly on the perils of his flight, the Caddo lakes, and the wild mobs of Arkansas and Tennessee.

“I rode the whole of the distance,” he said, “and ’mid the hardships incident to such a flight my heart was buoyed up with the strong hope that in Kentucky I would find patriots arming for the whole country, and the fires of patriotism burning brightly. Instead of this, I see, with sorrow, Kentucky far beneath South Carolina in consistency. She stands tottering, undecided which way to go, as if there could be two right sides to any question.”

“I agree with you in every particular, cousin Robert,” said Allen. “I have my fears, however, that General Buckner, who commands the State Guard, is now working to hand over his men, and with them the State, to the rebels.”

“Allen, I have traveled over two thousand miles to reach Kentucky. I came here to act. The Government has called for troops, and your miserable governor, Magoffin, refuses to respond. I will not remain here while the country needs my services. Gaines and myself will start inside the week for some State that is raising Union troops, even if it takes us to Massachusetts.” Robert’s face assumed the expression that came over it when Townsend accosted him at the polls as he stepped up to vote.

“Kentucky cannot remain long undecided, Robert,” said Allen. “She must take sides, and, despite the number of secessionists in our midst, I am confident the majority of our people are in favor of the Union. In the streets of Lexington you will see hundreds of men and women openly wearing secession cockades, but I am glad to say they are not our thinking people. My advice would be to you, stay here till the Government adopts some positive course of action, and then I promise that you go not alone to her aid. What say you?”

“I am willing to be guided by you in this, and here let me express my pleasure at seeing you so decided,” said Robert.

“Whatever course you choose to pursue, gentlemen, count me in to the death,” said Gaines; “though I fear our efforts to maintain the Union will be unavailing.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BARBECUE.

A few days after the arrival of our friends at Mr. Warren's, Gaines was taken ill with a brain fever, the result of hardship and anxiety. During the delirium, which lasted several days, he raved wildly about the trials through which he had passed, and all of Mr. Warren's family became familiar with his past troubles. Everything that faithful attendants and skillful physicians could do was done to restore him, and after nine days the fever passed off, leaving him feeble and emaciated.

In the meantime Allen and Robert had been busy in the neighborhood, rousing the latent Union element, and organizing a company secretly pledged to the Union, though nominally belonging to the State Guard.

In the latter part of May it was decided by the people of Jessamine and Fayette counties to give a barbecue to the military organizations of both places. The place selected was on the banks of the beautiful Kentucky River, a few miles above the Shaker Ferry. There was an ample space of pasture-land for the movements of larger bodies of troops than could have been assembled by both counties, and around the fields on the hills that swept down to the river, were the grand woods so peculiar to this portion of the

State, and which afforded fine points from which to view the parade.

Early on the morning of the day set apart for the barbecue, scores of carriages could be seen on the way to the grounds, and bands of horsemen poured into the woods from every direction. The bridles of the horsemen were decorated with bunches of ribbons, the colors of which denoted the sympathies of the rider. Those in favor of the Union wore red, white, and blue; those who advocated secession chose red, white, and red, and, from the number of the latter streamers, the majority of the horsemen were certainly in favor of the South. Several companies from Lexington came down on a special train, and marched across from Nicholasville, carrying their colors covered.

In the finely-shaded grove where the feast, or barbecue, was to take place, hundreds of the most beautiful girls in Kentucky strolled around, watching the new arrivals, waving their handkerchiefs to friends, and showing decided enthusiasm whenever a company advanced which they knew to be in favor of secession. Many of them wore small southern flags pinned to their breasts, and there were not wanting those who dared in the same way to carry diminutive flags representing the whole Union. The large assembly was not composed wholly of young people. There were scores of fine, hale-looking, elderly men and matronly women present, evidently as much interested in what was going on as were the younger persons, and as much divided in their feelings toward the Union.

By eleven o'clock the woods were crowded with citizens and citizen-soldiers, and rival bands alter-

nated with "Dixie" and the "Star-spangled Banner." The morning was spent in listening to speeches which were either weakly conservative or extremely southern in the sentiments advanced. The latter speakers were most popular, and their most radical ideas were most loudly cheered. During this time the dinner was being barbecued, and as the ox, and sheep, and scores of poultry wasted before the huge fires, the black cooks looked as if they were preparing a meal for the inhabitants of Brobdignag. Long tables, supplied with linen, dishes, and cutlery by the neighboring farmers, or brought from a greater distance, radiated in a half circle from the fires. Huge kettles of coffee, boiled on smaller fires, and piles of cold meats, pastry, and preserves were stored in the branch-covered larder. That the dinner was enjoyed, the rapid disappearance of the good things showed, but it was equally observable in the wit and repartee all around, and the constant chorus of laughter that came from every table. It was a good place to see the gallantry of the young Kentuckians, and to have displayed to advantage the beauty of Kentucky's daughters.

After dinner was over an order was read announcing that in half an hour the assembly would sound, and the members of the State Guard would be required to fall in promptly with their different commands. It was the most exciting half hour so far. Fair hands were not wanting to adjust equipments according to the feminine ideas of beauty, and musket muzzles were adorned with little red bouquets, nor was it deemed a breach of good discipline to carry them so in the line.

When the bugle sounded, and the infantry and mounted men moved into the field, each company was cheered by its friends, and the men walked more erect for the recognition. After the mounted men had formed, the infantry, at a double-quick, took a position on their left. The first company in line was headed by a man noticeable among the many. He was about thirty-five years of age, over six feet in height, finely-proportioned, and straight as an Indian. His hair was a very light brown, close cut, and his firm mouth was covered with a large, light-colored moustache. His face was long and muscular-looking—what would be called a Scotch face—and his greyish-blue eyes had a sharp, cold, and cunning expression. As he marched with drawn sword at a double-quick, in advance of his company, cheer after cheer went up from citizens and soldiers for “John Morgan and the Lexington Rifles.”

It was decided by the officers, after the review, to have a sham battle, for the amusement of the spectators and the particular delight of the fiery soldiers themselves. The infantry marched with admirable deliberation to a point to the left and at right angles with the spectators. The cavalry took a position parallel and to the right of the anxious assemblage, and then, with praiseworthy coolness, sat on their horses while the opposing infantry loaded their pieces with blank cartridges. At a signal, a number of horsemen dismounted, and after disentangling themselves from their sabers, they boldly advanced to skirmish. The infantry did the same, and the watching people held their breath. Perhaps there were no better riflemen in the world than that collection of Kentuckians rep-

resented. Any of them could have chipped a squirrel off-hand at a hundred yards ; but to shoot off-hand under the circumstances was not soldierly, so the skirmishers dropped gracefully on one knee, took a deliberate aim at their opponents, no doubt, and fired. They continued to stain their pants on the grass in this way for some time, when each party appeared to be driven back, and the cavalry remounted and the infantry dropped into their places in the ranks. It was a novel idea but worthy of a great leader ; the officer in command of the infantry ordered a charge on the cavalry, and with furious yells they rushed down on the astounded horse. The cavalrymen could have stood the firing and yelling, but the horses became utterly disgusted, and turning tail they galloped wildly in every direction through the field. Several prisoners were taken, and the infantry were in high glee, and good-naturedly offered to receive a charge from the cavalry. The old positions were again taken, the charge was sounded, and four hundred magnificent horsemen swept across the field. Even in sport a cavalry charge is grand. The horsemen yelled, fired their pistols, and flashed their sabers. The infantry reserved their fire and their equally injurious yells till the horses came close up, and then they poured in both, and the horses wheeled and ran back, testing in a severe way the skill of their riders. This ended the battle.

So far the only flags carried by the Guards were the State colors and guidons. After a short rest from the fatigues of "the battle" the troops formed to march in review, and other flags were unfurled, and wild cheers broke from the multitude as the

crimson folds of the "stars and bars" rose over each company along the line. But the cheers died out as a squadron of cavalry from the further end of the field advanced, bearing in its center the emblem of Union, the old Stars and Stripes. The cheers were not loud that greeted it, but more than one eye moistened at its sight, and more than one heart blessed brave Allen Warren and his "brown-horse" squadron. The surprise of the multitude and the pleasure of the Union men increased when, after advancing across the field, Warren's company opened and disclosed to the rear the red and blue uniforms of the chasseurs. This company carried the Union flag, and was commanded by the gallant Saunders Bruce, a brother-in-law of John Morgan.

After this strangest of all reviews, it was decided, as a fitting close to the festivities and exercises of the day, to have a peaceable contest of the merits of the Union and secession cause. Two squadrons of cavalry were to form at the further end of the field, one carrying the southern colors, the other those of the Union. The color-bearers were to have fifty yards the start, and at a signal all were to gallop across the field, and the flag first in was to be crowned with a garland, the southern flag by a Union girl, the Union flag by one of opposite sympathies. The horsemen rode back and formed in line. The colors were advanced; Captain Morgan by general desire carrying the confederate flag, and mounted on the best horse they could find where all the horses were good. Allen Warren advanced abreast of Morgan, from his own squadron, carrying his own flag. A moment or two of anxiety, and the bugle sounded the "advance," and

both squadrons, with their flags, sped like a whirlwind over the field. The color-bearers seemed fairly to fly, and their followers came thundering behind. They were within three hundred yards of the goal, and Allen was three lengths ahead. He felt certain, as did his men, and already they began to cheer him. But just as he seemed most secure, his horse stumbled, fell on his knees, and the flag dropped from Allen's grasp. A loud cheer rang out from the opposite line. Morgan was ahead. Quick as a flash, a black horse leaped out of Warren's squadron, and without a moment's check the rider swooped down, seized the flag, and tossing it over his head with a cheer that electrified all who heard it, he flew past Morgan, and before the southern flag came up, Robert Warren dismounted, and kneeling amid a huzza of admiration from friend and foe, he had the old flag crowned.

Shortly after this the barbecue broke up, and the different companies of the State Guard marched home. Before Allen Warren dismissed his men that evening, he drew them up in line, and addressed them as follows :

"The President of our country has called for troops to maintain the Union intact, and Kentucky has refused to respond. This, however, does not prevent patriots from acting as individuals. Let those of you who are in favor of offering your services to the Government at once, draw your sabers and advance to the front." Every sword leaped from its scabbard, and every horse advanced.

"I feel proud of you," said Allen, with more feeling than he usually manifested. "To-day you saw the men who, sooner or later, we must meet on the field

of battle. They are our own brothers and friends. But no tie of consanguinity or social relation must hold us from the road to which duty points. Be ready to start from here at a moment's notice. And if you do not hear from me before, we will assemble the day after to-morrow at the usual hour at our rendezvous. Attention! Right face! Break ranks—march!”

Individually the men came up to grasp the hands of the cousins ere they rode to their homes, in none of which could they find general sympathy.

As Allen and Robert turned their horses homeward, they talked over plans for the future.

“Allen,” said Robert, after they had conversed some time, “I have decided, as you know, to be a full private in your command when we are accepted by the Government. I cannot retain my servant, and I do not wish to have him away from me. Will you engage him?”

“Certainly, Robert, if it will please you,” said Allen.

“It will. And then Archy is free, and he does not know what to make of it. He could not care for himself, though he is one of the most faithful, pious, and reliable men in the world. And to tell the truth, we were never parted for a day, except when I was at college.”

“I thought about it myself,” said Allen, “before you spoke. Indeed, Robert, I think it will be well to remove Archy, for I understand our coquettish cook, Aunt Pheny, has designs on his heart, though the poor fellow talks about nothing but Susey and the piccanins.”

After reaching home they found a number of the young people assembled from the neighboring plantations, to spend the evening with Miss Bell. All were loud and generous in their praises of Robert's exploit.

"You did splendidly, cousin Robert," said Russell, "though it came near costing you your life."

"How was that?" asked Robert.

"Why, I heard one of our most desperate men say that if you had not acted so quickly he would have shot you."

"What delightful men you have in your squadron, Russell. Assure him for me, should you see him again, that we Texans can ride well, and shoot better," said Robert, with a gay laugh.

That night, before Robert retired, he sent for Archy, and that faithful fellow soon appeared, hat in hand.

"Archy, I am going to leave here in a few days, if Mr. Gaines is strong enough. I am to be a private soldier, and cannot have a servant. Would you be willing to go with Master Allen?" asked Robert.

"Mauss Robut, I doesn't want to lebe yeh. Why can't I go 'long, an' tote yer gun an' tings? Ise got lots of money frum ole mauss, an' can take keer ob mysel'." Archy spoke in a tremulous voice. But he brightened up when his master explained that he would be near him daily, and could help him, if he were Allen's servant, when he willingly consented

CHAPTER XV.

TRIALS OF SOUTHERN LOYALISTS.

It was comparatively easy in the summer of 1861, when Lincoln called for troops, for the young men of the North to respond. All their sympathies were with the Union—their prejudices as a rule against the South. They left their homes with the “God-speed” of friends and relatives, and they stood in the ranks beside brothers and schoolmates. They had no opposition to their feelings or views of duty, and they strengthened the ties of friendship and consanguinity by their actions. How very different it was with the men who fought for the Union from the South. All their prejudices and associations bound them to their States, and opposed them to the “Yankees.” It was popular to favor secession, and social ostracism resulted in an opposite course. They had not even the blessings of mothers or the sympathies of fathers in every case to give them strength, and often, as with Allen Warren, they had to take sides against the brothers they loved, and array themselves in arms against life-long friends. They could not organize in their own neighborhoods, but stealthily, one by one, they had to escape to some point where they could find the flag protected by the men of the North. In case of sickness or wounds there were no furloughs or leaves of absence to welcome homes, for those homes

for four years were scenes of constant strife. Yet with all these difficulties staring them in the face, in addition to secession in Tennessee, and a false neutrality in Kentucky, by thousands gallant men from each State gave up homes, friends, relatives, social position, and early prejudices, and took upon themselves hardships, privations, and dangers, that the nation might live. It is well for the future of America that a love for the Union was not sectional or partisan during the war. Every southern State was represented by organizations or individuals on the side of the Union, and it can be safely said that every northern State was represented in the armies of the South.

By the middle of June, Captain Warren's men, to the number of fifty-seven, had assembled at Jeffersonville, Indiana. They left their homes a few at a time, but they found hundreds of loyal Kentuckians awaiting them, and the number daily increasing.

Nothing looks more peaceful than the first camp of new troops, particularly if the men remain long at the first rendezvous. Every man gathers about him the luxuries of home, and fixes up his quarters as if he intended permanently to locate; and as he adds some article of comfort to his mess he never imagines that it will not be of service during the whole war, or that he cannot carry it or pack it away in the company's wagons. Companies had wagons then. Crackers, and pork, and coffee, were the main features of the camp ration even at that early day in the war; but who thought of eating the ration as a whole when itinerant butchers brought fresh meat to camp daily and fresh bread could be had at a few cents a pound?

Venders of tough cakes and doubtful pies made fortunes in our first camps, and purchasers of bacon and hard-tack secured those articles at a fearful discount. Concocters of lemonade and retailers of other doubtful drinks always commanded purchasers, and the cheap literature and card trade did a flourishing business. The camp at Jeffersonville was the heaven of dogs, cats, little pigs, and saucy-looking chickens, for the men wanted pets, and their tastes in that line were variable. Yet the new life on which Robert Warren entered was not monotonous, though he longed for an advance. There was the daily drill, the parade, inspection, guard duty, and camp detail, which usually occupied his time. Every moment not so occupied was spent in studying tactics, and General P. St. George Cooke never had a more faithful student than Robert Warren. Archy acted as cook for Captain Warren, and as no election had yet been held for officers, all the friends messed together without any breach of military etiquette.

During the month of August it was rumored that the rebels, who were swarming along the southern border of Kentucky, were preparing to advance into the State; but so closely did they guard their lines that it was difficult to obtain reliable information. At this time Robert Warren was sent into the State on detached service, and while he did not like the nature of his duties, he was glad to have the monotony of camp life broken. He returned on the first day of September, and reported the enemy preparing to violate Kentucky's neutrality. The information he obtained was of the most valuable kind, because wholly reliable. Three days after his return, General

Polk, at the head of twenty thousand men, advanced into Kentucky, and, with a soldier's instinct, seized the impregnable bluffs in and around Columbus. This incident was hailed with joy by the Union Kentuckians fighting in West Virginia and in camp north of the Ohio. Across the river and over the mountains they poured, and the southern flags so boldly displayed in Louisville were withdrawn when that bravest of Kentucky's sons, General Rousseau, at the head of his intrepid legion, unfurled the flag of the Union and marched south through the streets of the city from which he had been virtually a refugee. Noble Rousseau, let men speak of thy *post bellum* acts as they may, their slander cannot dim thy fame, nor blot from the history of thy country the deeds of glory written in blood with thy sword. Never doubting when duty called; never wanting when danger threatened.

Camps were soon established for Union troops in northern and central Kentucky, and seeing the war was upon them, neutrality was thrown aside, and men openly ranged themselves for or against the nation. Buckner, with the majority of the State Guard, went south. Captain Morgan remained in Lexington till after the Union troops took possession, never attempting to hide his sentiments. Learning one night that his arms would be seized next day by a Federal officer, with a boldness and cunning characteristic of the man, he called a meeting of his company at the armory in the center of the town. He told his men the time had come to leave. He proposed starting that night, and if there was not a man for every musket, he would take the muskets and find men. His

proposal met with a quick response, and the Rifles that night started south from a Federal camp. The next morning the news spread that Morgan had gone, and troops were sent in pursuit. They returned at night congratulating themselves with the capture of the two wagons containing the arms. The long boxes were unloaded and stored carefully away, and it was some time afterwards that on being opened the boxes were found to be filled with stones. Morgan had prepared the wagons for capture, threw his pursuers on the wrong track, and escaped with his rifles. This was the first war act of the great raider. Captain Bruce, Morgan's brother-in-law, about the same time joined the Union army and raised a regiment.

The legislature of Kentucky at this time appeared to wake up. The secessionists offered a resolution asking the northern troops to leave the State, but it was lost, and a resolution, introduced by the Union men, asking Bishop Polk to withdraw from Kentucky, was carried by a large majority. It is needless to say that the martial bishop did not obey the request, but went on fortifying his post as if he intended to remain permanently.

The post of Camp Dick Robinson, near Danville, called after the noble man on whose farm it was established, became the great rendezvous for the Union men of the South. Here the regiment to which the Warrens and Gaines were attached was stationed, though detachments were always on the move, making futile raids in the direction of Humphrey Marshall's lines, or south with the hope of feeling Zollicoffer's advance.

Captain Warren's company was always on the

move, and while they never had what green soldiers desire, yet dread, a brush with the enemy, they got a good knowledge of the country to the south, and gathered up hundreds of refugees, who were swarming in from East Tennessee. It was sad to see those men, ragged and footsore, armed with the squirrel rifle and shot-gun, creeping into the Union lines.

One night while in camp in the broken country southeast of Crab Orchard, Robert Warren was stationed as an advanced vedette about half a mile down the road. It was about two o'clock, and unusually dark. Archy, who sought every opportunity of being with his old master, had gone out to the post, and was conversing in a whisper; as they stood beside their horses. Suddenly they stopped talking. Something was moving in the bushes to the left of the road. They listened, and heard distinctly two persons talking in a low tone and moving cautiously, as if to get closer to the vedette. Robert quickly unslung his carbine, and, stepping in a stooping posture near the bushes, he shouted out:

“Halt! who goes there?”

No reply came, but two men started from their crouching position and ran past him. He called on them to halt again, when one of the men turned and fired, the ball whistling past Robert's head. The flash had hardly died out when he fired, and a cry of pain came from one of the men, and another shot from his companion. Robert had his finger on the trigger to fire again when a voice called out, “We surrender! we surrender!”

Calling Archy to advance with the horses, Robert, with his pistol cocked, walked to the spot from which

he heard the shout, and there found the two men. One was lying on the ground groaning, and the other was kneeling by his side, wringing his hands and crying, "Ned, Ned, my boy—my own boy! Oh, God! they have killed you!"

"Who are you?" demanded Warren.

"We 're from Tennessee, sir," said the man who was kneeling.

"Yes; but what is your command? Are there any more of your men near here?" asked Robert.

"No, sir; only we 'uns. We do n't belong to no command; and my poor Ned—he's all that's left, sir; an' he won't be left long," said the man, bending over the prostrate form.

"You 're a rebel, are you not?" asked Robert.

"No, sir; no, sir," replied the kneeling man as he tottered to his feet, "but you are. Yeh would n't 'a shot Ned if yeh wuz n't."

The truth flashed upon Robert. He felt the cold sweat flashing upon his brow. Those men were refugees.

The firing had alarmed the posts to the rear, and through them the company was soon under arms and formed so as to place the fire between them and any advancing foe. In a few minutes, a number of men who had been sent forward by Captain Warren arrived, and, learning the state of affairs, they placed the wounded man in a blanket, and Archy, with three other stalwart fellows, carried him back to camp. Robert was relieved shortly after this, and he nervously hurried to the fires to ascertain the fate of the man whom he had shot.

He found Captain Warren kneeling over the form

in the blanket, and trying to stop the blood which was flowing from the right breast of the wounded boy, for such he was. He could not have been over sixteen. His form, poorly clad, was very slender, and his fair, curly hair was brushed back by the old, grey-headed man who moaned by his side.

Robert, like a great many of the southern planters, knew something about medicine and surgery, and, though very much agitated, he was soon at work examining the wound. The ball had struck the boy in the right breast as he was in the act of firing, and, glancing around, it came out under his arm. As there was no bleeding from the mouth or nose, Robert felt encouraged, and knew that the lad was suffering more from the shock and the loss of blood than any vital injury. Giving him some stimulants, he soon stopped the bleeding, and dressed the wound. Blankets were not wanting to make a comfortable bed for the little fellow close to the fire; and when he turned and said, "Grandad, I feel all right agin," the old man thanked God, and wept like a child.

Captain Warren, with a characteristic thoughtfulness, had supper prepared for the fugitives, and Archy never worked more rapidly or willingly than in its preparation. The boy ate heartily, wounded as he was, and the old man, satisfied by Robert that the boy was safe, devoured the food set before him like a famished man. After both had eaten, Captain Warren brought the old man a pipe, for which he seemed grateful, and a number of the men, including Gaines, gathered about the group at the fire, while the lad closed his eyes and slept.

"I am sorry," said Robert, as he looked from the

blazing logs to the old man's face, "that I was compelled to fire at you. You should have halted when I challenged you, and you ought not to have fired on me."

"That's true, stranger," said the old man, "but I reckoned ye wuz rebels. I did n't 'spect to fine fren's so near."

"Why, where were you bound for?" asked the captain.

"I wuz goin' to the Union camp," said the old man, "an' 'bout an hour afore I met you 'uns, Ned an' I came near runnin' plum inter a grist of rebels. They wuz n't mor' 'n a half mile from whar Ned wuz shot, an' I thought when I heard a man holler ter halt that it wuz them. Ned an' I have had a mighty tough time a gittin' here, strangers, an' I did n't want to be tuck gist when I wuz near over my trouble."

"Is this lad your son?" asked Gaines, who drew near to the old man.

"No, stranger; he's my son's son. His father's dead. He wuz shot 'bout six weeks gone." The old man's voice trembled, and he took the pipe from his mouth and looked over at the sleeping boy. "Ned's all that's left," he continued. "Thar wuz three more of us, but they've only left Ned, an' if I hadn't a started whin I did, they'd a' got us too. We've had a rough road, strangers."

"I am very sorry, old gentleman, that I have given such a painful termination to your journey. But you must know I did my duty."

"Sartinly, stranger; we'uns started the shootin'," said the old man; "an' he mout a hit you, all the same."

The old man still smoked, and after Archy had spread some blankets for him, Robert said :

“You must need rest. I have had a bed made for you, and while I should like to hear your story I hope I may have that pleasure some other time.”

“No, stranger ; I’m rested now. I’m ’mong frien’s, an’ I feel a load taken frum my heart on his account,” pointing to the sleeping boy. “I can’t close my eyes this night, an’ if it wouldn’t tire yeh, I’ll tell yeh all ’bout it.”

The group drew closer to the fire, and the old man began.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OLD MAN'S STORY.

“We come'd from near the Harricane. Yeh don't know whar the Harricane is? No? Well, mos' people don't what I've met. Its twenty miles north of Cleveland, right close ter Georgia. Reckon, strangers, none on yeh wuz ever thar? Supposed not, but its right smart country roun' thar. I've lived near the Harricane nigh on ter fifty year, an' I wuz a man whin I went in thar with my father from North Carolina. All that section 'bout the Harricane wuz then held by Injuns—Cherokees an' sich. You remember they wuz toted wes' by Ole Hickory. Ole Hickory wuz my man. I voted fur him fust, las', an' all the time. Pity he wasn't livin'! What did yeh ask? Yes, I farmed some, but I wuz poor, an' so wuz the ole man; we never owned niggers, sorry to say. My ole woman's dead. Hez bin nigh onter fifteen year, an' I lived with Ned. Ned wuz my oldest boy. Dan and Dick lived clos' by, an' did some farmin' too; they warn't much at it though. They did right smart huntin' in the mountains, though game ain't like whin I fust went ter the Harricane. Wuz Ned, an' Dan, an' Dick all my children? No, stranger; I've one gal livin', an' tother one, purty as a peach, died six weeks ago. Poor chile, it bruk her heart whin they hanged Bill Smith, her husband. Yes, stranger, 'twuz

th rebels. I've got another son in Texas. His name's Jim, but I ain't seen him since afore the ole woman died. He wuz a restless feller, an' I heard as how he got in agin with the Cherokees what used ter be roun' the Harricane when he wuz small. 'Squire Roberts tole me he saw in a paper that Jim wuz hung in Texas. Shouldn't wonder, fur they've killed all my kin but him sleepin' over thar. Glad to know, stranger, yeh think Ned'll live. Not that life's much ter me now, but I promised the boy we'd go back ter the Harricane an' revenge his father.

"I'll tell you 'uns all 'bout the 'lection. I'd orter begun thar, but my mine is all a buzzin,' an' I've got a big load on my heart. I hope, stranger, (looking at Robert) you'll never feel as I have. Me nor the boys didn't know much 'bout politics. We allers voted democrat. Yeh know ole Hickory wuz a democrat, an' that ar's my principle all the time. All our folks voted Douglas; reckon that wuz all squar'. Wall, glad you uns think so, fur we allers meant right, though none on us, 'cept Ned, has got any schoolin'. Did yeh ask Ned's name besides Ned? Yes? Wall, it's Dawn. Dawn's my name, too.

"After the 'lection we thought things wuz all right. We uns heerd all 'bout Lincoln bein' President, an' I tole the boys I wuz sorry it wuzn't Douglas, an' they all 'greed the hull wuz far, an' we'd git Douglas in some other time.

"The nex' thing we know'd the rich white men from Coosa an' Ringgold an' Chattanooga wuz a holin' meetin's through the country, an' cryin' fur war, an' sayin' the time had cum ter bust the Union. I tole Tim Cheatham, at a meetin', that wuzn't my doctrine,

an' he stopped an' called me a traitor, an' said he'd shoot me. I wuzn't very much skeered, but the boys, knowin' I'd speak out agin breakin' the Union, took me off.

“ They had another 'lection, but as it looked like a fight, the boys an' me staid away, fur hundreds an' hundreds of men come over from Georgia, an' voted in Tennessee. Me an' the boys seed how it wuz. The rich men wuz boun' ter break up the Union, an' they wanted ter make it look as if the people wuz willin'. Mos' of my neighbors roun' the Harricane didn't vote, fur 'twuzn't any kinder use.

“ Wall, after this they began raisin' sojers, an' a rite smart of young men what know'd nothin' 'bout the Union or secession, fired up an' went in. My boys all thought like me. They wuzn't agoin' agin the country. One day a feller, callin' himself Cap'n Rusk, with a hull lot more men, come over from Cleveland an' said he wanted my boys ter list. Thar wuz only me an' Dick home at the time. No, Dick wuzn't married, he wuz my youngest boy, an' has been helpin' me since I got ole. Cap'n Rusk said ter me when I met him at the door :

“ ‘ Are you ole Dawn ?’

“ I said I wuz the same.

“ ‘ I understan',’ said Rusk, ‘ that you're a Yankee an' all yer boys.’

“ I tole him I reckoned not, seein' as I wuz born in North Carolina, an' had lived at Harricane fifty year, an' the boys wuz all riz 'roun' thar.

“ ‘ Wall,' he said, cussin' awful, ‘ it don't matter jes' whar yer uns wuz born ter make yeh Yankees. The meanest Yankees I knows on is right har in Tennessee.’

"I said I knowed that 'ar wuz true, mosly, fur a lot of men who wuz Yankees by birth was now South bustin' up the Union, jes' coz they owned niggers.

"I didn't mean ter rile Rusk, but he got terrible mad, an' said: 'I come clar' over har ter see you uns, an' if yer boys don't jine in an' fight fur the conferacy, we'll hang 'em shuah.'

"I tole him I reckoned not much would he hang. My boys wouldn't lie 'roun' an' let folks hang 'em.

"'Whar is yer boys?' said Rusk.

"'I don't know,' says I, 'but we uns is 'roun' har purty much altogether the hull time.'

"'Then,' said Rusk, cussin', 'I'll stay till they come, an' I'll wait inside this house fur 'em, an' I'll sen' men over ter the other houses and catch the hull lot.'

"Then he sent off mos' of the men ter Dan's an' Dick's. Little Ned wuz in my house all the time, an' Dick laid low awaitin'. Now, I owned my own house, an' says I ter myself: 'Mr. Rusk, yer not agoin' ter walk right inter my house without I choose ter let yeh.' I ain't very strong, to be sure, strangers; les' wise, not so strong as when I wuz young, but I'm jes' 'bout as hard to skeer, an' when Rusk got off his critter, I picked up a ax near the doah an' waited.

"He walked up kinder bold, an' I waited till he come ter the doah, an' I spread myself out.

"'Get outer the way, yeh d—d ole traitor,' said Rusk, catchin' me an' pullin me by the collar.

"'No,' says I, 'this is my house, an' onless you uns has the law with yeh, yeh can't go in.'

"While I wuz speakin' he struck me, an' I fell agin' the wall a-bleedin'. Dick heerd all an' seed all, an' he run out jes' as Rusk cocked his pistol an' wuz pint-

in' it at me. That wuz enough fur Dick. I seed the devil burnin' in his eyes as he picked up the ax, an' with one hand swung it clar inter Rusk's head, and he fell right afore me. Then Dick tuk hold of me, an' afore I knowed it, we wuz in the house an' the doah closed.

"'Now, dad, we uns have ter fight,' said Dick, an' he run to a winder with his rifle. We'd lots of arms, an' I took my own gun. I'm hard to beat, strangers, with a rifle. When we looked out we seed some of Rusk's frien's a-tryin' to tote him off, an' others watchin' fur us. Jes' as soon as we showed our heads they fired. Then me an' Dick let drive, an' I tell yeh, frien's, Rusk's men didn't make nothin' by it, neither.

"Wall, Ned thar, (pointing with his pipe to the wounded boy,) he loaded the guns fur us, an' fur nigh an hour we had some tall shootin'. Then the res' of Rusk's men came up a yellin' an' cussin' like mad, an' swarin' they'd burn the house. Dick saw one of them a crawlin' up with some fire, an' he jes' riz ter the winder an' drawed a bead an' blazed, an' then I heerd another shot, an' Dick jumped back inter the room an' fell dead with a bullet-hole right over his right eye. Strangers, I can't tell yeh how I felt then, but I didn't grow weaker as I'd a-thought aforehand. Me an' Ned lifted Dick a-one side, an' Ned took his gun an' Dick's place at the winder.

Bimeby, I heerd some shoutin', an' Ned looked out an' saw his dad an' Dan an' some others a-gallopin' up like mad. I tell yeh, strangers, whin I heerd that I purty near dropped. But Rusk's men jes' scooted when they seed our frien's. I don't know how many we hit beside Rusk, but a right smart, I reckon, seein' as how thar wuz seven blood-puddles outside.

“Wall, Dan an’ Ned an’ Bill Smith an’ four others of our frien’s came, an’ I showed ’em Dick dead on the floor with his eyes open an’ the red blood a-droppin’ from his hair. I can’t tell yeh how we all felt. I tole the boys jes’ how it stood, an’ we staid thar an’ talked and ’vised with one another. Ned’s wife, she wuz over with her little girl, Sally, a-seein’ Dan’s wife, who’d had a baby two months afore, an’ when she an’ Sally got back, they took on awful.

“Wall, strangers, I don’t like ter tire yeh, but this is the fust chance I’ve had ter talk, an’ it kinder lightens my heart to tell it all over ter frien’s.

“We knowed thar wuz no kinder use in stayin’ aroun’ the Harricane, so we left Ned at home with his mother, an’ Bill Smith’s wife bein’ far gone an’ skeery, he couldn’t leave her, so he staid back too, an’ promised Dan ter see to his place till we seed what wuz goin’ ter happen. That night we took ter the hills an’ staid out a week afore we heard any news. Then Role, ’Squire Robert’s nigger, hunted us up an’ tole us that the night afore they cotched Bill Smith an’ hung him in front of his own house, an’ his wife a-lying sick on the bed, and that little Ned, over thar, wuz in prison. I’ll tell yeh, strangers, that come hard. We all kinder got desprate. We couldn’t live all the time in the hills, fur game wuz skeerce, an’ I knowed by the tracks in the woods they wuz huntin’ us, an’ would tree us bimeby, an’ mayhap hang dan an’ Ned without seein’ their wives. As fur me, I jis’ wanted ter die, but I thought on Ned, over thar, an’ wanted to live fur him.

“Wall, we ’greed ter go down ter the Harricane, an’ we got in that night, an’ thar wuz no one aroun’

cept our fren's, an' had n't been all day. We went asleep. I wuz with Ned; an' I tell ye my ole bones, like my heart, wanted res'. But I could n't sleep for thinkin' of Dick, an' Bill Smith, an' poor little Ned, over in Cleveland in prison.

"Afore day jes' a little we wuz all woke up by men a rappin' an' a yellin' at the doah. Ned cum over whar I wuz crawlin' inter my clothes. 'Dad,' says he, 'they 've come fur we uns. I'll not be tuk. I'll fight till I die.'

"I tole him not to shoot, I wuz sick of blood, an' he might get off without; but he would n't hear me. Says he, 'Dad, I know they 've come ter kill, an' I'll make 'em pay for it. You lie low while I try ter run for it; an' if I die, or never get back, take care of the two Sals an' little Ned,'—meanin' him. His wife tuk on awful; but 't was n't long. I heard him kiss the two gals; then a kinder quick he opened the doah, an' with his rifle clubbed he leaped out. I could hear the shots, an' yells, an' blows, an' groans, an' then a cheer from a lot of 'em, like devils, an' I knew Ned wuz killed.

"This is the hardest part ter git over, frien's. No one could tell me aforehand I'd a-lived through it. They hauled me out an' showed me the body, and the two Sals run out an' put thar arms aroun' it, an' took on as if their hearts 'ud break. The day wuz jest a clarin' in when they put handcuffs on me, an' they made me walk ter Cleveland, though the sun wuz hot an' my heart seemed like a ton in my breast.

"They couldn't make me feel wus whin they tole me Dan wuz dead. He died a fightin', though, seein' as how I heerd them speak about four dead men, an' I know'd Ned killed two.

“Wall, when we got ter Cleveland they put me in a kinder celler whar thar wuz more prisners, an’ in thar wuz little Ned.

“Me an’ him staid in thar a month, an’ at night he slept in my arms. Yes, they give us plenty ter eat, sich as it wuz, but little Ned wanted the sun an’ the air. I could see him wiltin’ away afore my eyes. I don’t know why they let us out; thar wuz nine boys an’ ole me with us. They’d ’a let me out afore if I’d swar to support the Confederacy, but I tole ’em the Union cost me too much ter sell out so cheap.

“Did yeh ask if any tuk the oath? Wall, yes, right smart. Poor critters, I didn’t blame them. It’s a hard thing ter be crowded in the dark, an’ layin’ on a cold floor an’ thinkin’ of one’s little ones.

“No, they never tried us. Ned an’ I went back ter the Harricane, an’ Bill Smith’s wife an’ baby that died whin she did, an’ as soon as it wuz born, wuz layin’ in the groun’ with her husban’.

“The two Sals wuz glad ter see us, an’ took on right smart. They’d had a tough time, but ’Squire Roberts helped them. The ’Squire wuz fur the South, but he wuz a good man fur all. ’Twa’s he ’vised me ter start North, a promisin’ ter take car’ of the two Sals.

“I’ve kept you ’uns up now longer than I’d orter, but ’t would take till day fur me ter tell all about the rough times me an’ Ned had comin’ here. We met lots of Union men in the mountains, an’ all ’peared ter suffered jes’ like us. Six weeks, strangers, we uns have been travelin’, hungry an’ footsore an’ sleepy. An’ Ned never let down once. Whin I played out he toted my gun, an’ whin it wuz cold sleepin’ in ‘be

mountains he hugged up near an' put his arms roun' ter keep me warm.

"Yer sure Ned ain't bad hurt?" asked the old man, looking earnestly at Robert.

"Yes, my friend; I am sure he will soon be all right."

"Wall, I feel better than since Dick wuz killed afore my eyes. I think, now that I've got this off my mind, I kin sleep."

So saying, the old man lay down on the blankets Archy had prepared, and was soon sleeping as soundly as little Ned.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREPARING FOR ACTIVE SERVICE.

A few days after the incidents narrated in the previous chapter, Captain Warren returned with his company to Camp Dick Robinson. There little Ned was placed under the care of an Army surgeon and the old man's heart was made glad by the prospect of the speedy recovery of his boy.

Eighteen hundred and sixty-one passed slowly away leaving behind its record of humiliating defeat to the Union forces. More than one sanguine heart began to feel the gloom that hung over the nation, and none fully appreciated the task that lay before the national forces. Though Robert Warren had benefited by his six months training in camp and on the scout, he longed to be brought in direct contact with the enemy; not that he courted danger, but he knew that fierce battles must be fought, and the sooner the better. This desire possessed all the troops in that portion of Kentucky, and they hailed with joy the rumor that passed through the camp early in January, 1862, that they were to move south against Zollicoffer. The southern general, with his Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama brigades, at the same time threatened an advance in force, and it was soon evident that a collision would take place.

On the 16th of the month Warren's company tem-

porarily attached to the First Cavalry, was sent out to picket the approaches near Logan's Cross Roads, a few miles north of the Cumberland River, along which the enemy were strongly encamped. There is no labor so trying to green troops as picketing close to the enemy, particularly when they know them to be strong and their own support weak.

As Captain Warren stationed his men he said to Robert, who was in charge of one of the posts:

"Sergeant, you are about to have your wish. If I am not mistaken you are on the scene of your first battle."

"Yes, and perhaps his last," said Gaines, in a tremulous voice.

"I have prayed for this day, Captain," said Robert, "and if we fail it will not be my fault."

While he spoke his lips grew firmer, and an ashy pallor came over his face. It was evident he was controlling some strong feeling, no doubt fear, but he did control it, and turned his face toward the camp of the foe.

During the afternoon and night there was no firing, but the cold weather, the miserable roads, and the proximity of the enemy were more trying than an actual fight. On the following morning General Thomas came up with five regiments and ordered the cavalry to push beyond Logan's Cross Roads, in the direction of Mill Springs. They had advanced but a short distance when the line was halted and a skirmish line formed. Robert at first thought it an unnecessary precaution of his captain, but he had hardly dismounted and advanced to position before he saw a long, thin line of gray advancing from the woods

in the direction of Fishing Creek. The enemy came up within four hundred yards, and as they approached Robert Warren felt a lump rising in his throat, and a cold perspiration stood in great beads on his forehead. He tried to keep cool, but the hand that held his carbine trembled, and his teeth chattered as he bit the cartridge. He looked to his left, and there stood Gaines, with an expression of age on his face, and beyond him little Ned, evidently cooler and happier than any man in the line. The skirmish line of the enemy halted, and little puffs of smoke were seen to come from their pieces, followed by the sharp whistle of the balls and the subsequent report of the arms. The sound took a load from Robert Warren's heart, and his nerves grew steadier, but as he raised his carbine to fire he could not draw a bead, and a haze seemed to surround his weapon. He had often shot a deer, off hand, at five hundred yards, and it was not considered by him a wonderful exploit. Now he fired at a mark equally good, and recovered his carbine to watch the result, but there stood the rebel skirmisher coolly loading his gun, and evidently unaware of the desperate attempt on his life. This harmless firing continued for some time, and there was an evident desire on both sides to get closer together. The enemy advanced a hundred yards to a scrubby fence, and their deliberate firing soon told—one of Warren's men fell shot through the head. The enemy were dislodged by a flank movement of a company of the Tenth Indiana, and then a common feeling of humanity and curiosity drew the cavalry around their dead comrade, the first man they had seen killed in battle. They leaned

on their arms, officers and men, and, with pale faces, watched the little stream of blood trickling from the soldier's forehead. Even the cool Captain Warren looked agitated, and joined in the expressions of regret. This unmilitary proceeding was speedily ended by the enemy's firing on the group, and the old positions were taken. The enemy, under cover of an old log barn, got still nearer to the Union skirmish line, and two men were wounded, and became objects of curiosity and wonder to their comrades in reserve. Captain Warren saw the enemy's advantage, and sent Lieutenant Tucker with twenty men to dislodge them. The lieutenant made a detour, and, taking advantage of a ravine, he struck the enemy in the log-building unexpectedly, and drove them out pell-mell. Tucker's men cheered lustily, and were evidently delighted over something besides taking the barn. The whole line advanced, but it did not retain much order after nearing the building, for Tucker's men hailed them with the cry of "Two dead rebels! two dead rebels!" The men went over the fence in great glee, and without order, to see this wonderful sight. Sure enough, there, in front of the building, lay two men in gray, one dead and the other faintly trying to swallow the water which one of Tucker's men held to his lips, but his efforts ceased in a few seconds, and with a sigh he fell back dead. As they clustered around their dead enemies, there were no expressions of delight; wonder and sorrow seemed depicted on every face; and Gaines, who had placed his hand over the heart of one of the men, expressed the feelings of his comrades when he said, "War is a terrible thing."

Captain Warren soon saw that it would not do to let his men run along the line every time a comrade was killed, or gather in groups to see a fallen enemy, so he again formed his line, but only to fall back before the rebels, who now advanced with the confidence of superior numbers.

The Union picket line was forced back towards Logan's Cross Roads, till dark, though there was no more fighting that day. As Robert Warren lay in his tent that night he could not sleep, but tossed nervously about on his blanket, and when he dozed he would see before him the dead comrade with the blood oozing from his forehead, and the men in grey lying dead with their glazed eyes looking up at him.

As he tried to change the current of his thoughts by thinking on other subjects, the fly of his tent was raised and Archy crawled in on hands and knees.

"Is that you Archy? Why are you not asleep?" asked Robert, as he sat up on his blanket and pulled his overcoat, which answered for a pillow, with his boots, under his arm to support him.

"Mauss Robut, I didn't want to 'sturb yeh," began Archy, "but I've suthin' ter say."

"Well, Archy, out with it," said Robert, seeing that Archy hesitated.

"I'se just come up frum de kernel's, whar I wuz talkin' wid his boy Jake, and I heard 'em say dat dare'd be an awful fight to-morrow," said Archy in an amazed voice.

"What?" asked Robert with a laugh, "did Jake say that, or the colonel?"

"No, marse, de kernel. Him an' a lot more officers wuz at the fire, an clar to Heaven, I felt my har risin'

when dey spoke about de fight, and de lots ob dead, and de bullances fur de wounded, an de fearful times. I wish sartin we was back at Jeff'sonville agin.” Archy said this sentence as if he meant it.

Robert tried to console him, but made the matter worse by saying “you need not feel frightened, Archy, you will be away to the rear, where there is no danger.”

“Mauss Robut, I ain't skerry. Reckon yeh knows dat, but I'se frighten' sartin 'bout yeh; I'se been a prayin' as I come har yeh'd be right smart sick afore mornin'—backer'll do 't, I heard a man say so in the company.”

As Archy concluded his queer suggestion, Robert laughed so as to waken Gaines, whose snoring had hitherto shown that he was asleep.

“Why, what's the matter?” asked Gaines in surprise, as he sat up, rubbing his eyes and yawning, and Robert, despite Archy's “please mauss, don't,” related the merit of tobacco as a producer of sickness, and Archy's suggestion about using it.

“That's a very praiseworthy idea, Archy,” said Gaines laughing, “but if every man uses it who is scary, this army will be the sickest lot of men on top of the earth to-morrow, if there is tobacco enough to go around.”

“Well, 'pears dar's no use in talkin',” said Archy, rising to go, “seems yeh's both boun' fur ruin. Wid de help ob de Lor', I'll pray to-night, and I'll beg at de Trone when yeh's in de battle. Good night, Mauss Robut and Mauss Andy.” And Archy stole out, followed by the good-night of his friends.

How soundly soldiers usually sleep after the long

march or agitating picket, and how utterly wretched the feeling is when before day on a cold winter morning the rat-tat-tat of the "long roll," with its increasing velocity of sound from a score of drums, startles the sleepers, and the bugle call of "boots and saddles" awakens the weary riders. Old troops never hear it without a curse, and to new troops the unsuspected "long-roll" sounds like a death-knell.

On the early morning of the 19th the alarm call rung through the camp at Logan's Cross Roads, and the excited, half-rested little army hurried into stiff boots and wrinkled clothes, and, seizing their weapons, stood ready for action. Captain Warren's company was retained with General Thomas, and the battalion of the First hurried to the support of the videttes at a gallop. News came in that the enemy was advancing in force. Quick as thought the tents were struck and loaded, and the wagons sent to the rear. Through the thoughtfulness of the officers, coffee had been prepared for the men, and, after the camp was cleared, they gathered in groups about the fire and swallowed the thick, refreshing beverage from their tin cups and ate with a relish their dry hard-tack. It is well to pray, but bad to fight on an empty stomach.

Before six o'clock, and still dark, the advanced cavalry were struck and fell back before the enemy. The Tenth Indiana and Fourth Kentucky pushed on rapidly to support them, and General Thomas, giving directions to the Tennesseans under Carter, and McCook of the Ninth Ohio, rode with his staff at a gallop to the front. Captain Warren's company had not been moved, and his men stood by their horses

nervously listening to the battle, and roll, and shout, from the front. Just as Van Cleve's Second Minnesota passed Warren's company, an aid galloped up and ordered him to advance and take a position on the left of Kinney's battery, which was stationed in a corn-field towards the left of the line. This order was hailed with a shout, and Captain Warren reached his position and dismounted his men in time to see a grey column dashing across the field against Fry's Kentuckians. Kinney opened fire as the enemy came parallel to his guns, and they fell back in disorder. Then began a tempest of fire from the rebel lines, accompanied by shrill yells. Carter took position in the rear of Kinney, and for one hour the two lines, within musket range, poured in terrific volleys of musketry, while the artillery tore great gaps in the opposing columns. Under Carter's fire the enemy began to give way. Then a deafening cheer was heard to the right of Carter's brigade, and Major Kammerling, at the head of the Ninth Ohio with fixed bayonets, rushed upon the confused rebels and swept them from that portion of the field. As Robert saw the gallant Ohioans dashing across the field, all his impulses were to mount and join in, but he had to await orders. The enemy rallied in irregular masses, and for about twenty minutes concentrated a fire of musketry and artillery on the troops immediately in front. The ammunition ran short in several regiments on the Union right, but they stood exposed like veterans till served, and then the order came from General Thomas for the whole line to advance, and a cheer that made the heart leap came in response. Into the saddle leaped the cavalry. Robert had time

to look to the left, when the Fourth Kentucky seemed completely mixed up with the enemy on the road. Directly in front of Captain Warren the Twentieth Tennessee rebel was falling back in confusion, and the order was given to charge them. Quick as a flash, the sabers were drawn, and the horses with swift bounds rushed upon the enemy. There was no order in the line, but it dashed, an irregular, irresistible, mass upon the demoralized foe. Robert felt as if his veins were on fire, as he heard the cheers of the men around and saw on every side the shattered enemy reeling, bleeding, and flying—turning at times to discharge their pieces in their flight. That feeling was worth a life-time of pain. A number of prisoners were sent to the rear, and Captain Warren was still pushing after the Tennesseans, when he was halted by an aid and ordered to the Somerset road. He fell back, exposed to a fire from the rebel artillery, and on gaining the road he learned that General Zollicoffer was lying dead in front of the Fourth Kentucky, where Colonel Speed S. Fry had encountered and shot him. There was but little fighting after this. The rebels fled, throwing away their arms and covering the road with piles of useless baggage, which old soldiers never carry. The wounded lay in the fence corners by scores, and the dead were scattered along the roads and in the woods. This indeed was a battle and a victory, and as the horsemen pushed towards the Cumberland, picking up stragglers and removing obstructions from the path of the pursuing army, Robert felt that the flag was approaching the Brazos.

The retreat of the shattered rebel army into Tennessee under Crittenden has become a matter of history,

and small as was the battle of Mill Springs compared with subsequent engagements, it will still stand prominent as the initial victory of the war. It solved the problem of sectional valor and falsified the southern boast of superiority. Four regiments, the Tenth Indiana, Fourth Kentucky, Second Minnesota, and Ninth Ohio, bore the brunt of the battle, and by their persistent valor routed an army of twelve thousand men, who the day before the contest deemed themselves a match for forty thousand "Yankee hirelings."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SITUATION AFTER THE BATTLE.

After the defeat of the enemy at Mill Springs, or Somerset, or Logan's Cross Road—for the fight is known by all those names in the North, and as Fishing Creek in the South—all southeastern Kentucky was evacuated by the Confederates. It is said that Humphrey Marshall had a force near Cumberland Gap, but as that Quixotic individual was too fat to ride on horseback and too unwieldy to march on foot, he was forced to retreat in a buggy into Tennessee before Garfield's Ohioans.

Buell and Grant, in the western part of the State, were busy to improve the advantage gained by General Thomas. Grant was coming up the Ohio from Cairo, and proposed to ascend the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers with his forces and Foote's gunboats. Mitchell was pushed out toward Bowling Green, and evidences of an active campaign were seen on every hand.

A few days after the fighting at Mill Spring, Sergeant Robert Warren was somewhat astonished by an orderly's informing him that General Thomas wished to see him at his headquarters. Robert spent a few minutes attiring himself in a soldierly way, and reported to General Thomas, whose headquarters were in a house near by. He was admitted at once and

found the commanding officer and General Schoepf busy looking over a map. General Thomas returned Robert's salute, and then said :

"I understand, sergeant, you are from Texas, and familiar with the South and its people."

The general waited for a reply, and Robert answered, "I am, sir."

"I learn also," continued the general, looking up from his map, "that you made several very successful reconnoissances toward the enemy's lines, and even inside of them last summer."

"I acted on detached service for a while, sir, and I think the information I obtained was reliable," said Robert, looking at the general, whose eyes were bent on the map.

"Sergeant, what educational advantages have you had, what is your profession, and what were you engaged in before the war?"

Robert briefly related his business, giving a short sketch of his leaving Texas, and concluded : "I studied engineering, particularly, when at college, in the hope of being able to make the profession useful in Texas."

"You are just the man General Buell wants, and about whom he has written." The general hesitated a moment, and looked down at his map ; then glancing quickly up, he continued : "Sergeant, it should be the desire of every good man to aid our cause by every means in his power."

"Yes, sir ; by every honorable means," said Robert.

"Exactly," said the general with emphasis. "Now, you must know—at least I do—that you can be immediately of more service to the country in another position than that of carrying a saber in the ranks."

"I don't understand you, sir. I prefer to be a private."

"And there is no more honorable position than a private's," said the general, getting up from his chair.

"But I desire you to aid us, sergeant, by becoming attached to our present very imperfect secret service."

"Do you mean as a spy, sir?" asked Robert, coloring to his temples.

"Sergeant, many give the members of the service that name, but in military matters we are all spies; our object is to learn all about the enemy and cover our own acts. Every means taken to do so, if successful, is legitimate. I can say that I would not hesitate to enter the enemy's lines, feeling sure a great advantage, and a consequent saving of life, could be gained by it. Now, sergeant, are you willing, knowing the dangers, to take a risk for the sake of our cause?"

Robert toyed nervously with the tassel of his sword-knot, his eyes cast on the ground. All were silent for nearly a minute; then he looked full at the general, and answered: "I am."

"That is good. Report here for orders in one hour."

Robert hastened to Captain Warren's tent and related to him his interview with General Thomas, and his decision to obey his *request*, for no officer could *command* an enlisted man to do such service.

"You are going on a dangerous mission, cousin Robert," said the captain, "but I feel you can do our cause great good. I will, no doubt, see you soon, as it is reported we are going to join General Buell. You must write me, however, by every opportunity. Now, cousin, sorry as I am to part with you, I will

help to get you off." Stepping to the door, he called, "Archy, come here, your master wants to see you."

Archy came in, his sleeves rolled up, and his black face shining from exposure to the camp-fire, where he had been cooking.

"Archy, I am going away for some time, and I am sorry that I cannot have you with me. At least, not at present. You must take good care of the captain and of your horse till I get back," said Robert, looking up kindly at the faithful fellow.

"Mauss Robut, I'd radder go, sartin. Mauss Allen has heaps o' men to kar fur him, an yeh've none but me. I does n't want to part wid yeh, Mauss Robut." Archy was evidently agitated, and the cousins tried to console him with the hope that he would soon see Robert again, and that his stay would be very short. The captain promised, in addition, to read him every letter his master wrote.

Archy said but little in reply. At the request of his master, Don was speedily saddled, and the few articles of clothing necessary for the journey folded in the saddle-bags.

A few minutes before the time to report to General Thomas, Robert bade his friends good-bye, and mounting Don, who looked fit for the commander of all the armies to bestride, he rode to the headquarters. As Robert entered, the general looked up with a pleased expression, and handed him a letter to General Buell. Then, giving him instructions as to transportation and transit papers, the general shook his hand, and Robert Warren passed out of the tent.

His transportation, as he desired, enabled him to take his horse. A two days' ride took him to Nicholas

ville, and in seven hours he was in Louisville, where he reported to General Buell. Here Robert underwent another examination, and was somewhat surprised when General Buell told him he must report at once to General Grant, then at Paducah. Steamboat transportation was provided to Paducah, with a letter in cipher to General Grant. Before twenty-five hours, Robert was at Grant's headquarters, awaiting further instructions. General Grant read his letters from Thomas and Buell, and taking a keen survey of Robert, he seemed satisfied.

"Are you acquainted with the Eighth Texas Cavalry?—Rangers, I think they call themselves," asked the general.

"Yes, sir; they are commanded by Colonel Terry, of Richmond, Texas."

"Exactly."

Robert continued: "I am familiar with every foot of ground where the regiment was raised, and know many of the men."

"An acquaintance with the individuals is no advantage," said the general. Then waiting a moment, he asked, "Do you know General Buckner, or Floyd, or Hanson?"

"No, sir."

"I am glad you don't. Yesterday some of my scouts captured a mail intended for General Buckner and his Kentuckians at Fort Donelson. The mail carrier is here, safe. His name is Turner. You can take the mail in his place."

The general looked up quickly at Robert, and evinced no disappointment at the pallor which overspread his face.

“With your instructions, sir, I will try,” said Robert, a perceptible tremor in his voice.

“Very well. Now get rested, and I will prepare your instructions. Read and burn them after you have read them. Be guided in the details by your own good sense.” The general called Lieutenant Owen, who took charge of Robert, providing him with quarters and refreshments. Robert had a rest for five or six hours, when Lieutenant Owen brought him his instructions. They were to enter Fort Donelson with the mail and ascertain the strength of Pillow’s command; the location and strength of the batteries, and every other fact that might be of importance. He was to return along the river till he met General Grant, and communicate what he knew. He was provided with money and an exact copy of Turner’s safeguard, excepting the name.

Just as it was growing dark, Robert was in the saddle and his horse’s head turned South. He had doubts about taking Don, but knowing he could rely on him if speed and bottom were necessary, he preferred him to the horse Lieutenant Owen desired him to ride.

From Paducah he pushed on to Clear Springs. There, crossing the Cumberland by a ferry, he found himself at daylight outside the Union lines, and in the scouting grounds of the dreaded Texan Rangers.

He stopped at a double-log shanty on the bank, surrounded by little log corn-cribs, stables, and hen-house, and log fences inclosed the stump-covered fields about the place. His nose, if not his eyes, could detect the vicinity of loggy pigs in the square log pen near the house, outside of which was a shallow,

green pool, where a number of ducks were deluding themselves by going through the motions of a wash, or standing on their short legs and making comical efforts at diving. A wagon with dirty red wheels stood before the door, and the wheels answered as pegs for the rusty, broken harness that trailed to the ground. A harrow, with several teeth out, leaned against the trough, which was partially filled with brownish water from the clap-boarded roof of the shanty; and where the water trickled from the trough three children, very dirty and apparently of one age and sex, sat about the pool, earnestly instructing each other in the manufacture of that article which imaginative children delight to form, when privileged to do as they please on the ground—mud pies.

As Robert dismounted before the door, a tall, raw-boned man, with a round fur cap, bald in front, and a shirt open at the throat and rolled up at the sleeves, displaying his freckled arms covered with reddish hair, greeted him with, "Hello, stranger!"

"Good morning, sir," said Robert. "Can I have my horse fed here, and get some breakfast for myself?"

The proprietor, for such he proved to be, stroked his red beard, squirted a red stream from his mouth, and leaning on the red wagon-wheel with one of his muddy boots raised on the spoke, said:

"Stranger, we've done a right smart of feedin' of folks of late. I'm willin' to keer fur yeh, reckonin' as how yer right, but I don't know 'bout Moll."

"I am willing to pay you liberally, sir, for any accommodations," said Robert, dismounting.

The long man, with a mysterious air, motioned

Robert to follow him, and getting to windward of the pig-pen, he turned, and in a hoarse, mysterious whisper, said :

"Stranger, I reckon yer one of 'em?"

Robert assured him that he was, though he did not clearly comprehend who the others were.

"Wall, I knowed yeh wuz one of 'em," said the long man, "coz they's bin round har right sharp of late. But, stranger, Moll hates 'em like hell."

Robert assured him that he regretted this feeling on the part of Moll, and intimated that a liberal payment for anything they did for him might pour oil on the disturbed waters of Moll's temper.

"No, stranger, you don't know Moll as I do who've lived with her nigh onto ten year," said the long man in a still lower whisper.

Robert lowered his voice and artlessly said, "That's true," which statement he might freely make, as he had never set his eyes on the terrible Moll, and but imperfectly understood her relations to the long man.

"Yer right thar, stranger," said the long man, as if Robert had delivered a lengthy opinion on Moll's character after years of close study.

"But," he continued, "why are yeh har 'lone? You fels don't offen go 'lone?"

Robert did not appear to heed the question, but asked, in a hurried whisper :

"When were any others here before, and which way did they go?"

"Yisterday, stranger. That's why Moll's so riled this mornin'. I think they said they wuz goin' down toward Bowlin' Green soon, but yeh knows more about that than me."

Robert said, "To be sure," though he wished in his soul he could say so in fact. Of one thing, however, he was satisfied, namely, that the long man was a rebel in his sympathies, and that by his allusions to "them" he meant scouting parties from the southern army. He told him without reserve that he was going to Fort Donelson, and that he had a mail for General Buckner and his men from their friends inside the Yankee lines. He informed the long man that he was not acquainted with the country to the South, and that after he and his horse had been rested, he would pay the long man to place him on the right road, adding in a tone of great confidence, as he laid his hand on the red, hairy arm of his listener :

"I must get to Donelson by to-morrow night, and it would n't do to tell everybody my business. It is so hard to trust men now."

"Cussed ef yeh ain't right," said the long man, spitting with emphasis through the logs of the pigpen, to the evident disgust of the porker into whose eye the discharge went. "Cussed ef yeh ain't right. Now there's Moll, stranger, don't trus' Moll if yeh valley quiet. Moll's a snorter."

Robert promised not to place implicit reliance in Moll, nor take the adder-like "snorter" to his bosom, which statement satisfied the long man, for he immediately led the way to the log, earth-floored cabin, called a stable, and while Robert unsaddled the gal-lant Don, the long man filled the rack with fodder and the little log trough in front of it with corn. This done, the long man said to Robert :

"Reckon, stranger, yer right smart hungry. I'll go and bust it to Moll. Lay low."

This advice to "lay low" Robert promised to follow by remaining in the stable, while the long man walked out with a brisk air of confidence, which he lost as he approached the double-log shanty, for his motion was hesitating, and before entering he tried to whistle as he adjusted the ragged harness on the red wagon wheel, and cast troubled looks at the log stable and the cabin. He entered, and Robert heard a loud and excited female voice in the double-log cabin, and the long man's voice two octaves lower, trying to soothe his angered wife, for such Robert thought must be her relation to the long man, as only a wife could address him in the familiar manner of the loud-voiced female. He heard the long man say "money" and the snorter "bosh" and "yer a darned lunkhead." After an exchange of these loving epithets for some time, the woman's voice lowered perceptibly, and the long man, looking very red in the face, and chewing tobacco with a wonderful energy, emerged from the shanty and went to the stable. He greeted Robert with a hoarse and excited whisper :

"I fotched Moll, stranger. She's knuckled right under."

Robert said "I'm glad to hear it," and intimated that he would be glad to learn how this much-desired result was produced.

"Wall," said the long man, "I tole her I'd be d—d" — Here he was interrupted by a call from Moll, but seeing he had stopped his sentence at a point which might leave an erroneous impression on the mind of his listener, he finished his sentence as he walked to the door : — "ef I would n't join the Texans. And what do yeh 'spose Moll said, stranger?"

Robert gave up the conundrum at once.

“Wall, she said I’d be d—d ef I did. But that fetched Moll. When she gets on her high horse I’ve got the dead wood on her an’ swear I’ll join the Texans.”

As the long man showed his fur cap at the stable door, the snorter called to him in a loud voice to “hurry up his stumps and bring along the stranger.”

Robert intimated as he approached the house that it would be very agreeable to wash, a sentiment the long man did not seem to appreciate, for he answered, “Jes’ as you say, stranger,” and forthwith produced a rusty tin wash-basin, with a thick, stubby handle on one side. He filled it with water from the trough and placed it on a square-topped stump, near the mud-pie factory of the little snorters.

Robert informed the long man, as he looked at his hands, that soap was desirable; when the long man said, “Moll is death on soap,” and hurried into the shanty, from which he soon emerged with a dirty saucer half filled with a sort of brown molasses, or gangrened jelly, for it smelled very loud, and glistened on the surface with sickly-looking, prismatic colors. The long man ventured the self-evident information that “the soap was soft,” and that “Moll made it,” as he laid the saucer on the stump before the fastidious stranger.

After washing, the long man selected an oasis on a long, dirty towel, under the belief that the spot selected was clean, and Robert went through the motions of drying, then entered the cabin. There was a dense smoke inside and a stifling smell of burning bacon. In the center of the floor stood a

table supplied with blue-bordered stone ware. From an open-faced cupboard that was tilted back at the top against the shanty walls, strips of leather bordered the cupboard shelves, and the strips were ornamented at set distances with brass-headed nails. The nails were useful as well as dazzling, for they served to keep the spoons of various sizes and materials apart, which were hung by the necks in the black leather straps. There was a huge fire-place at one end of the shanty, and two monstrous andirons flanked a Dutch oven on the hearth. Through the door, looking into the other wing of the double-log shanty, a glimpse of the floor, covered with a confused mass of bed-clothing, like an agitated sea, could be caught, while Moll, like a siren, stood amid the woolen waves with a piece of glass in her large hand, evidently satisfied with the charms on which the stranger was soon to look.

Moll soon appeared, a large, full-faced woman, with black hair and eyes, and an open mouth that displayed the jagged ruin of what might once have been a very fine set of teeth. She was about thirty years of age, and her straight, baggy-looking, brown woolen dress served rather to show than conceal her Amazonian form. As she entered she addressed Robert in a loud but not a disagreeable voice, "Mornin', stranger! Comed frum fur?"

"Good morning, madam. I have come from the interior of the State," answered Robert, meekly.

"See any Union men up your way?" asked Moll, as she opened the Dutch oven and took out a pile of brown corn dodgers. Robert intimated that he saw a few at times, when Moll, who hastily removed the lid

of the overflowing coffee-pot, with the skirt of her dress about her hand to prevent it being burned, said with energy, "Union men—them's me, I'm a Union man." This was rather startling information, but Robert, supposing she used the word "man" in a generic sense, ventured to say he "knew a great many fine people who favored the Union." This statement had a softening influence on Moll, who soon commenced breakfast. The meal was not tempting, but Robert, who sat near Moll while she poured out the coffee, and handed dodgers and bacon to the little snorters under the table, enjoyed his meal, and praised Moll's skill as a cook. The long man, whose red beard glistened with pork gravy, corroborated Robert's opinion by stating "Moll could discount any woman on the river."

After breakfast Robert went to the stable, accompanied by the long man, and finding that the horse was doing well, he sat down on a log and enjoyed a smoke, while he obtained all the information he could about the Texans and the road up the river towards Donelson, with which the long man was evidently well acquainted. The long man, after Robert had learned all he could by questions, ventured the information that Moll was from Indiana and down on secession. In proof of this, he cited the following fact: "Thar wuz some Texans har a few days gone to dinner. One of 'em named Townsend tole Moll he was born North, an' I swar to gracious I thought she'd spring an' strangle him. As it was, kinder accident like, she spilled the coffee-pot down his back, an' I reckon it didn't make him any more comfortable for it."

After a few hours’ rest, Robert signified his intention to push on, and going to the house with the long man he asked him at the door how much he owed him. The long man looked down and said in a low tone: “Yeh owe *me* nothin’.” Moll overheard him, and shouted out:

“Nothin’, yeh loot? Am I a-goin’ to mess and slave fur nothin’? Bill Grimes, are you goin’ to take bread out of your own childrens’ mouth an’ give it away fur nothin’? Not much, while I boss this shanty,” said Moll, answering her own question. “You’ve gin enough to them Texas brutes, what’s so fond of pork. But I settled with one. Now, stranger,” addressing Robert, “fork me over ten dollars,” and Moll assumed a threatening attitude, as if about to enforce her order, while she reached out one muscular hand for the money.

Robert opened his pocket-book and handed her ten dollars in Confederate paper.

“Do you call that money?” asked Mrs. Grimes, indignantly throwing the bill on the ground. “Give me ten dollars in jingling cash, or ye’ll never git yer saddle agin. I’ve took care of that!”

“Moll don’t be a foo—— don’t be so funny,” said the long man, correcting himself. “The stranger’s money’s good.”

“Yes; good to light the fire. Come, stranger, fork over,” said Moll, more peremptory than before.

Robert laughed and handed her two five-dollar gold pieces, which mollified the snorter, for she said: “Them’s my spons!” and immediately went to the well, down which Robert’s saddle was hanging by a rope.

Don was soon saddled, and Robert mounted, when he turned and said: "Mr. Grimes, am I to have the pleasure of your company as a guide? I will pay you."

"No you ain't," said Moll, with anger in her black eyes. Then turning to the long man she commanded: "Say no, you ole fool; say no!" and the long man said "No," when Robert raised his hat, wished them good morning, and Don galloped up the Clarksville pike.

CHAPTER XIX.

UNWELCOME VISITORS.

About 10 o'clock in the evening, after a rapid ride of nearly sixty miles, over a rough, undulating country, and along a poor road, Robert drew rein at a plantation near Clydetown, Trigg County, close to the Tennessee line.

The proprietor of the place was a tobacco planter, and a decided States-rights man, who had only to be acquainted with Robert's business to aid him by every means in his power. He learned that a few hours' ride next morning would take him to Fort Donelson; so he saw his horse cared for, ate a hearty supper, and went to bed at once, telling the landlord, after he had paid him, that he would start in the morning before that gentleman was up.

Robert had scarcely removed his boots after going to his room, when he was startled by the tramping of horses outside his window, accompanied by the familiar jingle of Mexican spurs. He raised the sash cautiously, and could hear a jargon of voices close by, followed by the clanging of sabers on the gallery. The men had fastened their horses and entered the house, where they appeared to be well acquainted with the landlord, who met them at the door.

"Why, Lieutenant Bentley, I'm right glad to see you," was the greeting of Mr. Webb, the landlord.

“What’s the news? Are the Yanks advancing yet, or ain’t they going to come?”

“I shouldn’t be surprised if they would be along right soon,” said the man addressed as Lieutenant Bentley. “But we’re just returning from a scout, Mr. Webb, and we’re all hungrier than coyotes in winter. Can’t you get us something to eat and keep us for the night?”

“How many of you are there?” prudently asked Mr. Webb.

“Six, entirely,” said the lieutenant; “but you needn’t be particular; we’re used to it.”

Mr. Webb appeared to understand what the lieutenant was used to, for he said: “I’ve only one spare bed in the house, but,” said Mr. Webb, in a tone of recollection, “thar’s a stranger that’s got a whole bed to himself in thar. He’s going to the fort with a mail, an’s a fine fellow, riding a slapping black horse. I reckon you can sleep with him, or take the spare bed and let Townsend sleep with the stranger.”

“We will attend to the horses and supper first, Mr. Webb. The sleeping will be easily arranged,” said the lieutenant, as the Texans went out to attend to their horses, and Mr. Webb, after ordering a servant to prepare something to eat for the six hungry men, rapped at Robert’s door. On its being opened, Mr. Webb apologized for disturbing his guest, and said:

“I don’t know if you would object, sir, but there are a lot of Texans here—good fellows—and you would save one from sleeping on the floor by making room for him in your bed.”

Robert replied, “Certainly, Mr. Webb, there is room here for three, if necessary; but as I am a light sleeper

send my room-mate here as soon as possible, so as to get rid of the noise."

Mr. Webb thanked Robert for his kindness, and reminded him that as he started early in the morning he would have a cold snack prepared and left on the table for him, and the boy would attend to his horse.

Robert had not yet undressed, but as soon as Mr. Webb left, he finished disrobing, and tying all his clothing in a bundle he placed the bundle on a chair at the foot of the bed beside his mail-bags. Then he examined his pistols, and placing them under his pillow, he laid down, but not to sleep. He heard the Texans coming back from the stable, and shortly after the clatter of their knives and forks and the boisterous language of the rangers.

As soon as they had finished supper, Bentley called out:

"Say, Mr. Webb, I'm ready to go to roost; where am I to sleep?"

Mr. Webb answered: "The gentleman with the mail has no objections to one; he said two, but that would be an imposition. Then two can sleep on the floor and three in the spare bed."

"Then I'll sleep with the stranger; so here goes," said a voice that sent a cold thrill through Robert.

"No you don't, Townsend," said Bentley, pushing him back, "that's my nest for this night," and he unbuckled his spurs and belt, and taking a candle entered Robert's room. That individual was feigning sleep, with the clothes drawn half over his head and his face to the wall, while he imitated, capitally, that difficult and torturing sort of snore where the sleeper takes a long, whistling breath through his nose, ho^hh^hh^h

it for an instant in his lungs, as if to consider its quality, and then, as if satisfied that it smells bad, slowly puffs it out through his mouth.

It did not take Bentley long to undress, blow out the light, and leap into bed, muttering as he did, "That is one devil of a snorer!"

Robert started up as if suddenly awaked, and grasping Bentley's arms in his vice-like grip, said in deep, gruff tone: "Hello, who is this?"

"It's me, stranger—Bentley. By thunder, what a grip you have! Webb said it was all right."

"Oh! I beg your pardon," said Robert. "I was asleep and dreaming of danger."

"Well, all I've got to say, friend," said Bentley, laughing, "if you're as powerful as that when you're dreaming, I'd pity the fellow you got your hands on in anger when awake."

"One gets excited, you know," said Robert, in his assumed voice. Then continuing, he asked, as he turned from the wall: "Do you belong to the army, sir?"

"Yes," replied Bentley, "I belong to the Eighth Texas, Colonel Terry, Wharton's battalion, and jest about the best men ever got into this infernal State."

"I expect they are. I have heard them highly spoken of," said Robert. "What part of the State did you come from? I ask because I traveled in Texas some two years ago."

"You do n't say!" said Bentley, in surprise. "Why, we come pretty much altogether from Brazoria and Fort Bend counties. Were you ever down in that region, stranger?"

"Yes. I had a delightful time hunting down there

with a young man whom I knew at school. His name was Warren—Robert Warren, of Gonzelletta. No doubt he is here with you, for I know him to be a positive man who would not remain out of such a contest as this.”

Robert was drawing him on.

“I ’m right glad to know you’ve been in our parts, Mr. —.” (Robert supplied the word “Turner.”) “Yes, Mr. Turner, it’s next to meeting an old friend. But your friend Warren turned out bad,” said the lieutenant.

“I am sorry to hear that,” said Robert, in a low tone.

“Well, I was, too; for Bob Warren had many good qualities. He was handsome, rich, and well educated. I might say, too, that he was one of the bravest men I ever met; but the fact is he went against secession strong. The night of our voting on secession, he met three men on the road who had opposed him during the day, and with the aid of his big black boy Archy—you may remember him; supposed you would; he was a noticeable nigger—well, they killed one of the men dead and wounded the others, one of them so bad that he died; the other one is now here in the house.”

“Indeed,” said Robert, interrupting him, in surprise.

“What is the man’s name who is here?”

“Townsend,” answered the lieutenant.

“I do n’t know him,” said Robert.

“Wall, you miss nothing, for this fellow Townsend is a d——d beat—a renegade Yankee. I have no faith in them. He did n’t join us till a month ago, and then he came on to avoid being drafted.”

“You astonish me, sir, about Warren,” said Robert,

in genuine surprise, but with a disguised voice. "But how did he come to get away?"

"Just boldness, d——d boldness, Mr. Turner. There was a reward offered for him, and I tracked him to a settlement up the river, whar he was the day after the murder, a putting on airs. Why, he drank a toast plum agin us, and made the others join him, though they did n't see the joke till I explained it."

"I am still more amazed. I hope I am not keeping you awake, lieutenant."

"Not at all," replied the lieutenant. "I am glad to find a sensible man to talk to. Then I followed him to Marshall, and I saw him when he rode in with his boy and a fellow named Gaines. Thar was lots of Union men thar; so I did n't go for him in daylight, but waited for the night. Well, somehow he got suspicious, and left before dark. I got some fellers to follow him, but he dodged them, and got into some swamps near Caddo Lake. Shortly after a flood came and drowned him and the others. We found one of their dead horses and some of their clothes; so I reckon they've gone to that place whar all Yankees have got to go."

"Wonders will never cease, lieutenant," said Robert, "but your conclusion is correct. Before long we shall see a host of Yankees following in the tracks of this man Warren."

"I reckon, stranger, you come from Kentucky, by your talk," said the lieutenant.

"No; I came originally from South Carolina," replied Robert.

"The deuce you did! I tell you she's a bully State. I wish Kentucky was like her."

"How many men have you in the Eighth Texas, lieutenant, and where are they stationed?"

"We have about sixteen hundred, and they are stationed all along from Bowling Green to Columbus, scouting. I tell you the Yanks do n't know how to scout. We nabbed some of their men not long ago, and it would have made your head swim to see them swing."

Robert intimated that such a sight would be a rare treat, and then said,

"I am going to Fort Donelson with a mail in the morning. How long will it take me to get there if I start at four o'clock?"

"You can get thar ready by eleven, but, if you want company, I'm going down in the afternoon. I have to report to Wharton. Between me and you, I think I am to be sent inside the Yankee lines."

"A perilous but necessary duty," said Robert; then continuing, "I suppose we have a good force at Fort Donelson, in case of an attack?"

"I thought we had nigh on to fifty thousand, but I heard Pillow's chief of staff say to-day at Dover that we had only twenty-four thousand, including Forrest's cavalry."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Robert. "Have you any idea of what they are going to do?"

"Well, the supposition is now that the Yankees will attack Bowling Green. Then we'll join Albert Sydney Johnston, and move down the Cumberland, slap into the Yankee country. That's Wharton's idea, and he got it from good authority."

Robert turned towards the lieutenant and laid his hand affectionately on his shoulder as he said,

"Now what would be the shortest route for me to

take to the fort? I do n't want to be troubled with pickets, and guards, and the like, for I am in a hurry. I want to get back to Lexington in a week, and will have enough trouble with the Yankees, without being bothered by my own friends."

"See here, Mr. Turner, I've got a pass in my pocket allowing me to go through the lines at any time. You take it; I can make out I've lost it, and get another when I want it."

"No, my good friend," said Robert, feelingly, "I will not put you to any trouble. Hurried as I am, I would not bother a gallant soldier."

This decided the lieutenant, who leaped out of bed and fumbled with his pants till he found the open sesame paper, which he handed to Robert, and Robert got up and put it in his pocket, uttering profuse thanks as he did so.

The lieutenant told him not to mention it, and said: "Mr. Turner, you are a good fellow. Hanged if your voice do n't sound at times as if I'd known you all my life, and I keep trying where to put you, but as I never saw you before to-night, of course it's nonsense. Haven't you met fellows like that yourself?"

"Oh, very often," said Robert, as he thought how much Bentley had seen of him before, and how little to-night.

Both men remained quiet, as if desiring to go to sleep, but Robert's mind reverted to Gonzelletta. Bentley had left there more recently than himself. He might learn something about his family.

"Excuse me, lieutenant," he said, "but I cannot get that fellow Warren out of my head. I remember his father and sister. His mother, too, was a fine old

lady; and, if I remember rightly, he was attached to a sweet girl named Miss Boardman."

"Your memory is good, Mr. Turner; but it would be a long story to tell you all. The old man shielded his son, and he was sent to jail." Bentley stopped suddenly, for Robert called out, "Gracious heaven!" and groaned as if in agony.

"What's wrong, Mr. Turner? What's wrong?" said Bentley in terror, leaping out of bed. Robert sat up and clutching his fingers till the nails entered the flesh, he conquered his feelings, and said: "Nothing, lieutenant; but sometimes I am taken with a pain in the heart, and it comes sudden, like the blow of a dagger, and then is gone. I've just had a stroke, but it's past. Lie down, lieutenant, I will let you sleep, and I will feel better for being quiet. My long ride and anxiety have upset me. Lie down, lieutenant."

The lieutenant did lie down, first, however, offering to bring "Mr. Turner" a drink, or send for a doctor.

A few remarks about Robert's complaint, and words of genuine sympathy from the lieutenant, and they said "Good night," the one to sleep, the other to think of the grey-haired prisoner on the Brazos, and to picture to himself the terrible sequel of the story Bentley had just begun. But he only forgot himself for the moment; he felt that all his strength and coolness and courage were now required for his desperate undertaking, and it would be foolish to weaken himself by other thoughts. Still through the long hours, as he lay beside the man who once had sought his life, and whom a word would awake to vengeance, his mind turned again and again to the desolate home and the grey-haired man in prison, and the fatal knowledge in the heart of his sleeping companion.

CHAPTER XX.

AGAIN ON THE ROAD.

While the clock was striking four, Robert hurriedly rose, without waking his bed-fellow, and dressed. Going to the room where he had eaten supper the night before, he found the "snack" which Mr. Webb had promised awaiting him. The boy was up and announced his horse as just saddled.

It was a dark, cold morning, and Robert's spirits were anything but light as he turned Don's head southward. By daylight he had crossed the State line and entered Stewart County, Tennessee, and before eleven o'clock he had reached Dora, four miles south of Fort Donelson, and on the Cumberland River. He put up at a little out-of-the-way tavern, and saw that his horse was put in a stall where he would not attract attention, knowing that the Texans remember a horse better than they do a man. He found the tavern full of soldiers, swaggering and swearing in a manner peculiar to the uneducated men of the Mississippi Valley. Satisfying himself that there were no Rangers in the bar-room, he walked in, and stepping to the counter asked for "something to drink." Looking around, he noticed a young fellow with a frank, manly face, and nodding, Robert invited him to join him, which the young man very willingly did, first discharging a huge quid of tobacco from his mouth. Robert was

fortunate enough to secure a room to himself, and to this he invited his loquacious acquaintance, ordering more liquor to be sent to his room, a thing which delighted the landlord and the Mississippian, for such the young man proved to be.

“Where mout yeh be going?” asked the young man, after they had entered the room.

Robert assumed the vernacular peculiar to the Mississippians, and replied :

“Jes’ as soon as I kin git a little rest I’m agoin’ up ter the fort. I’ve got a mail for ole Buck an’ the boys from Kaintuck. I reckon they’ll all be kinder glad to har from home. What’s your regiment, friend?”

“I belong to the Second Mississippi, under Forrest. Mos’ of our men are up at Donelson,” said the young man.

“I reckon yeh know right smart of people up thar. Got millions of men, I reckon, in the fort?” said Robert, filling a glass with whisky and handing it to the young man, who took it, and this time economically held his quid in his hand, and restored it to his mouth after he had drank.

“Wall, we hav’nt got so many men, friend,” said the young man, drawing his coat sleeve across his lips, “but I think we’ve got ’nuff to clean out every d—d Yankee in the land.”

This was certainly modest in the opinion of Robert, and he ventured to say :

“I know we can lick the Yankees, if we’ve only got lots of cannon. Cannon is the thing, after all!”

“Yer head’s level thar, friend,” said the young man, looking very wise, “an’ I can tell yeh Fort Donelson’s chuck full of cannon.”

Robert looked up in wonder, and the young man repeated, "Yes, friend, chuck full of cannon. Now I know all about that, kase I counted 'em only Sunday last."

He then went on to name the batteries and enumerate the number of guns in each, and the size. This information was by no means reliable, and could only be of use in corroborating other facts which Robert hoped to obtain. He plied the Mississippian with glass after glass, till, overcome, he fell upon the floor, and, hiccapping the praises of his entertainer, he fell asleep.

Robert threw him on the bed and searched his clothing, but found on him nothing that would add to his information. He determined not to go up to the fort till after dark, so pulling off his boots, he lay down beside the drunken Mississippian, and, despite dinner-gongs, bugs, and drunken broils, he slept till after sundown. He was aroused by the racket made by the Mississippian in his search for the bottle, which he had purposely hidden before lying down.

He rose much refreshed, and gave the soldier the bottle, telling him to drink what was left. After a by no means hearty supper, he ordered his horse, and, learning the direction, he started for Fort Donelson.

With his hat slouched and his great-coat collar turned up, he rode at a sharp trot for about three miles, when he was brought suddenly to a stand by the peremptory "Halt! who goes there?" of an armed guard.

Robert pulled in his horse, and, in a gruff voice, replied "A friend, with a pass."

Without being ordered to dismount, the guard took

his pass, and, with one hand on Don's bridle, he called the corporal of the guard. That individual soon came with a lantern, and, glancing at the pass, he hurriedly raised his head and lantern, and in a hearty voice said :

“ Hello, Bentley, glad to see you, old boy ! ”

The light soon revealed his mistake, and in an excited tone he said,

“ You a prisoner ! Guards, seize that man ! ”

Robert explained, but it was of no avail, and just as he was about to start for the fort, a prisoner, he heard the same command of “ Halt ! ” and the voice of Bentley answered the challenge. The corporal recognized him, and went up to ask an explanation, while Robert pulled lower his hat and higher his collar, for the night, to him, was bitterly cold.

Bentley's account agreed with Robert's, when the corporal apologized, and handed his late prisoner a small flask, begging that he would drink to their better acquaintance. Robert made a show of drinking, and thanked the corporal, while he praised his soldierly vigilance.

“ Yes, friend, ” said the corporal, “ I know my duty, and we must be careful. It would raise hell with us if the Yanks could get a good spy to report everything in Fort Donelson. Between us, I do n't like the looks of things at Paducah, if reports be true. ”

It was cold and dark as the two Texans rode along laughing over the difficulty Robert had just escaped. How different were their thoughts, their motives, their duties. They passed several other guards without trouble, and entered the fort by a road along the river front. After riding about four hundred yards

Bentley pointed out General Buckner's headquarters and shaking hands with Robert, he promised to call on him in the morning, and rode off in another direction.

Before General Buckner's house there was a guard, to whom Robert expressed his desire to see the general. The guard called an orderly, and the orderly took in Robert's letter. Reappearing in a few minutes, he said, "The general wishes to see the courier."

Leaving the orderly to hold his horse, Robert entered, and found the general seated before a table covered with maps and papers. The general was a florid, compactly-built man, with a soldierly face and carriage. Robert had assumed the name of Roberts, and as such was introduced to a heavy-set man with a smooth face and a large soap-lock of black hair plastered down on his large, protruding forehead. This was Roger Hanson, of Kentucky, a man about fifty years of age, and exceedingly free and cordial in his manner. Robert noticed, as Colonel Hanson advanced to take his hand, that he walked lame, the effect of a duel before the war. The colonel was very inquisitive, but Robert answered or evaded his questions with skill. He was from Campbell County; had lived in Covington; had friends in Lexington; was there and was introduced to Colonel Hanson at a large States-rights meeting where Colonel Hanson spoke after his return from the east. He remembered that Colonel Hanson went east a Union man but came back in favor of secession. He quoted some of Colonel Hanson's speech, approved his course, and consequently won the heart of Hanson and the respect of the listening Buckner.

While Robert and Colonel Hanson were conversing, the general was sorting his own letters, and he finished reading one of some length, about the time the conversation appeared to lag.

"I am very glad to get these letters at this time, Mr. Roberts," said the general; "they contain much valuable and to me surprising information."

He continued to read, and Robert, with a child-like innocence of military etiquette, questioned the kind-hearted Hanson about the troops, the strength of the fort, and other facts, all of which he noted and consigned to his powerful memory.

After remaining at General Buckner's quarters for about an hour, during which time the general was busy with his letters, Colonel Hanson thoughtfully suggested that Mr. Roberts and his horse might be tired and hungry, and as Mr. Roberts did not deny the statement, the general apologized, and calling his orderly directed him to see that Mr. Roberts was cared for, and also to put Mr. Roberts's horse in his own stable.

As Robert was about leaving he turned, and, in a respectful tone, said:

"General, the circle expects my return in one week from to-day. I will need to start just as soon as possible."

"I will see that the mail is distributed at once, and any letters to return ready by to-morrow night," said the general as Robert walked out to partake of his hospitality. He was conveyed to a log house containing several rooms, one of them belonging to the orderly, which that individual willingly turned over to Robert, for his heart had been made glad by a letter from home.

Robert desired no supper, and from choice went at once to bed, but he did not sleep. He was preparing his plans for the morrow. Every sound was listened to, every word noted. During the long night he lay on his cot thinking of his dangerous position, or gradually letting memory and imagination run in other channels, till he was back at Gonzelletta. Once happy Gonzelletta! where as a boy he had chased the red deer on the flowery prairies and swam the San Bernard uncaring for the alligators or gar-fish. Then trouble was a myth, and life full of healthy joys. But times had sadly changed. What were they doing at Gonzelletta now? Had they released his father—his generous, pure-hearted father? He wondered if they had heard the story Bentley related about the lakes. Did they think him dead? Did Amy weep at the sad news of his death? But he would rejoice their hearts yet. He would one day return with the flag and the untorn star, and, as he thought of that, he clasped his hand to his breast and satisfied himself that the tatters of the Brazoria flag were there. His poor mother, he would make her yet look on the troubles of the past as a black dream, making real life brighter for its contrast, and the future lit with happy hope. His father should no more have the cares of the place. He was getting old and weak. His last days must be without annoyance and labor. He would smoke with him on the gallery in days to come, with Amy and the rest around them; and he would relate to the old man the stories of battles and dangers through which he had gone since that fearful night in February, '61. Dear Mary! He would lead her to forget the false love.

Some comrade, tried and true, would yet know her and love her. Through all his thoughts Amy ran like the angel of hope, and he pictured her the mistress of his future prairie home. Oh! the happy, happy future, seen through the eyes of hope, colored with the tints of imagination, who can count the wealth it contains, or wreath laurels more bright than those it holds? No clouds shadow it. No roughness rises on its smooth expanse.

So passed the black hours of the long night in waking dreams. No sound broke the stillness, save when the guards shouted at their posts "All's well." Would that the words were true the world over; but ere long the thunders of battle will break the stillness of that fort, and voices that lustily call "All's well" will weaken and be heard in the rattle of death.

Before morning Robert had matured his plans. He would not appear outside during the day, he must be sick. He remembered Archy's receipt the night before the battle of Mill Springs. So taking from his pocket some tobacco, he cut off a piece about as large as a beech-nut, and deliberately swallowed it. Early in the morning an orderly from General Buckner brought him a note, which proved to be an invitation to breakfast, but Robert could not rise, he was truly and thoroughly sick. A doctor was called in at once, who pronounced Robert to be suffering from prostration and nausea, caused by some long and constrained excitement. The doctor knew that Robert was a courier before giving the latter part of his opinion. Robert took some medicine, and the doctor left him, instructing the orderly to furnish a nurse and to see that the patient was kept quiet.

General Buckner called to see Robert, and regretted his illness, while he ordered the attendant to carry out the doctor's directions. Robert assured him he would be well very soon, and attributed the attack to his long journey and the excitement he had been laboring under. He told the general that he would soon be all right, and asked him to prepare the return mail as soon as possible, for he would be ready to mount when ready to leave his bed.

In the afternoon the doctor, who was attached to Buckner's staff, called again, and seeing that he was disposed to talk, Robert, who felt really lonely, begged him to remain with him, whereupon the kind-hearted physician sat down, remarking as he did :

"You will be all right in the morning, Mr. Roberts, if you remain quiet."

"Yes, doctor, but I hope to leave early in the morning, and I am very much disappointed that I cannot see the fort. I think my inquisitive friends at home will be sadly disappointed at my ignorance of this important place, particularly as I have not an idea of what a genuine fort is like."

The doctor laughed as Robert ceased speaking, remarking at the same time :

"Mr. Roberts, you lose nothing by being in bed, for you could gain but a faint idea of this place in a hasty survey." Here the doctor was interrupted by the attendant, who said Mr. Bently wished to see Mr. Roberts, but the doctor told him it was impossible, as Mr. Roberts was too sick to talk. After the nurse had gone out, Robert rose on one elbow, and said :

"Doctor, I want to know just what a fort is like. Say Donelson—the trenches, and all that."

The doctor laughed at the earnestness and simplicity of his patient, and tearing a sheet of paper from his prescription-book, he sketched what proved to be a very correct outline of the fort, with its guarded approaches. He gave an idea of the scale, the positions of different troops, the magazines and batteries, the weight of the guns at different points, the strong places and the weak, according to the opinions of the engineers, and other facts volunteered by him or skillfully drawn out by the patient. Had the doctor scanned Robert's face closely, as he spoke, he would have noticed an expression of intense earnestness, for he was now noting every line and fact for future use.

Robert expressed himself as thankful for the doctor's information, and, looking over the plan carefully, he tore it up, remarking,

"It would not do for the Yankees to capture me, even with so rude a sketch of the fort as this."

The doctor smiled, and hoped Mr. Roberts would "never get into the hands of the Yankees."

A little before dark, Robert, though still quite sick, got up and dressed. In answer to a note of inquiry from General Buckner, he repaired to the general's headquarters, where he found General Pillow, and underwent another cross-fire of questions, all of which were answered with a respect that vouched for the truth of the replies. General Buckner told him the mail would be ready by ten o'clock that night, and Robert informed him that by that time he would be well enough to leave the fort.

CHAPTER XXI.

FORT DONELSON.

Robert had everything in readiness to start before midnight, but he waited till about three o'clock in the morning, when he rode out of the fort, and crossed the river at Dover. His horse was rested, and he felt himself that all immediate danger was passed as he turned south on the Clarksville pike, resolving not to rest till inside the Union lines. Inside of sixteen hours he had crossed to the Tennessee River, up which, he learned from a rebel scout, General Grant was ascending, with a large force, in steamboats. He came up with the Union advance fifty miles above Fort Henry, turned over his mail, and made a careful report of his valuable information, before seeking the rest of which he stood so much in need.

Few positions held by the rebels were stronger naturally than Fort Donelson. Situated in a bend of the Cumberland, and on an elevation that gave a complete command of the surrounding country for miles, it presented an impassable obstacle to the ascent of steamboats on the river, and its reduction by land was thought by the southern engineers to be impossible. The country around the fort was thickly wooded, and presented no elevations which the batteries of an attacking force could avail themselves of to advan-

tage. The line of defenses was in the form of a semi-circle, the left resting on the river at Dover, and the right on the river six miles above. Fort Donelson proper crowned a ridge about the center of this circle, three hundred yards back from the river. The space between the fort and river was occupied by formidable water batteries, bearing on the approaches in that direction. Along the outward line of defenses were seven redoubts supplied with field artillery, and the intervening spaces were obstructed by abattis and trenches. Two creeks flowing eastward and parallel, one six hundred yards above the main fort, and the other half that distance below, added by their steep clay banks and swollen beds to the strength of the rebel position. Twenty thousand well-armed men, confident of their ability to defeat, on an open field, four times their number of the Yankees, occupied Fort Donelson, with its impregnable earthworks, and the best officers of the South commanded them. Of course they were confident, and laughed when they heard that Grant was advancing from Fort Henry and crossing the river seven miles north of Fort Donelson.

The afternoon of the 12th saw the head of the Union column across the Cumberland, and the rebel pickets falling back on the fort. Throughout the afternoon the blue lines felt their way west and south but, beyond an occasional shot from the pickets, all was quiet.

On the 13th, McClelland had pushed south toward Dover, feeling of and skirmishing with the enemy, but there was no severe fighting.

The night of the 13th came with a soft, balmy air, and a bright, full moon, shining down from

a cloudless sky, and reflected on the watchful sentinels within and the circling lines without, the fort. McClelland's men had three days cooked rations in their haversacks, and wondered why the attack did not begin. Early in the evening a cheer came swelling from the extreme Union left. The re-enforcements with General Smith and Foote's gunboats were in sight. The long blue lines filed out, the moon flashed on their polished arms, and the bands filled the air with patriotic notes.

That night saw a grand host resting on its arms, in position for the morning's conflict. McClelland, who had captured Fort Henry, and whose troops had so far done nearly all the fighting at Donelson, held the post of honor and greatest danger, on the right. Next to him, and in the center of the Union line, General Wallace's division was firmly posted, and extending north to the river were the brigades of General C. F. Smith, and on the river Foote's gunboats were moored for the morning's contest. The early night passed away, and with it the clear sky, the bright moon, and the warm, balmy air.

The morning of the 14th came with a cold, biting wind, accompanied by rain and sleet, but the storm of the elements was unnoticed amid the thunders of battle. Foote opened at day-break, and the tide of battle swept along the extended circle to McClelland. For three hours there was one continued roar from gunboat and battery, and the rattling volumes of musketry rose and fell in waves of sound along the extended line. Gradually the firing ceased on the Union left. The gunboats were disabled and sent helpless down the river.

Throughout the 14th the enemy, who had dreaded the gunboats more than the land forces, were made confident by the defeat of Foote, and came outside their works with Indian-like yells, and till late in the afternoon the contending forces struggled with varying success. But before dark McClernand had forced the enemy back, and rested his extreme right on the river below Dover, thus shutting off all retreat to the south. The storm of the previous night continued through the day, and the night of the 14th came to the fireless, weary army of Grant, with its cutting sleet and biting winds. The clothing of the men was frozen stiff, and the wounded suffered fearfully from the cold; yet there was no complaining. The army came for victory, and through the terrible night they waited anxiously for daylight, to renew the attack. Through the drifting snow and sleet the grey day dawned on the 15th, and again McClernand's gallant division received the first blow in the day's battle. The enemy saw they were being cut off, and made a desperate effort to force the First Division from the road. Seven thousand infantry were thrown forward under cover of their artillery. W. H. L. Wallace's and Colonel Oglesby's brigades received the first blow, and fell back slowly, resisting the fearful onset. In the meantime the batteries of Dresser, Taylor, and Schwartz galloped into position, and opening at short range they checked the rebel column, which swung around and struck Colonel Hayne's brigade. For three hours a terrible hand-to-hand fight with musketry at short range stubbornly raged along the front of the First Division. Logan and Smith, Oglesby and Dickey, with their Illinoisans,

fought till their ammunition was gone. Ransom and Dickey, though losing fearfully in men, held their ground. The enemy sent Forrest to charge the Eleventh Illinois, but his success was momentary. It seemed by eleven o'clock a. m. that McClelland must give way, but re-enforcements came from General Lew Wallace in the center, and Ross, of the Nineteenth Illinois, brought in two fresh regiments. The broken line was re-formed. The order to charge sounded along the front, and before the impetuous sweep of Union valor the rebels fled, their dead and wounded covering the line of their retreat. Like a bull-dog McClelland held the river bank, and the first line of rebel defenses before twelve o'clock was occupied by Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky troops. This repulse did not dismay the reckless enemy. They were now fighting for an avenue of escape, and they swept to the left against the brigade of Colonel Thayer of the First Nebraska. General Grant, who had been with the gunboats and Smith's division, reached the center of the field at the moment the storm of battle centered on Lew Wallace's brigades. But no man flinched. Thayer received the onset, and with his men from the Northwest and Illinois checked the rebels in his front, and, though exposed to a perfect torrent of fire, no colors yielded ground. Hurling back from the Union center, the enemy spent their strength in a wild and useless waste of ammunition. By three o'clock General Grant ordered an attack along the line, opening with Smith's division on the left. The order was answered with loud cheers, and Smith's massed columns charged over the rifle-pits, across the abattis, and into the enemy's ranks, where they planted and

held the Union colors. The news of this success reached Wallace in the center and McClelland on the right, and, though wearied by cold and hardship, their divisions received the order to charge with electrifying cheers, and closed in a death-struggle with the enemy. Night came, still bitterly cold, but the Union troops did not seem to heed it. They were confident of the morning's victory, and in that strong hope every other feeling was absorbed.

The morning did dawn, but no firing came from the enemy's front. The Union troops strained their eyes to the central fort, where yesterday the "bars and stars" waved in arrogant defiance, and there they saw floating the white flag of unconditional surrender. Two hours passed and the white flag came down, the Stars and Stripes went up to the mast-head, and forty thousand Union troops marched into the scene of their daring and victory.

During the battle, at his own request Robert Warren was assigned to a position as volunteer aid on the staff of General Smith, and he had a fine opportunity to witness this terrible battle. The feeling of sickening fear that unmanned him for a time at Somerset came in a milder form, but soon disappeared. He participated in the charge of Smith's division, and as they closed on the enemy he could see the rebel Colonel Hanson limping along the line and encouraging his Kentuckians by a reckless exposure of his own person. He did not enter the fort, for prudent reasons, till after the thirteen thousand prisoners had been removed or paroled, and then he tasted of a joy that paid him for all the danger.

It may be well to close this sketch of the fight at Donelson with a glance at the secret service.

In reading of a battle during the war the reader pictures to himself the engagement of the three great arms of the service. The thunder of artillery, the rattling fire and irresistible charge of infantry, and the exciting dash, with gleaming sabers, of the cavalry, all go to make up the idea of a battle, and the means by which a victory is gained. In the main this is true.

But there is another branch of the service, without which the army would be a blind giant, striking blows of equal weight at the lion and the mouse. Ignorant of the topography in its advance, it would rush into meshes from which retreat might be impossible, and disaster certain. A knowledge of the country is essential to a general commanding. He must know the strength, and, if possible, the exact position and intentions of his enemy. Accurate maps of State and county surveys give a general idea of the topography, but a slight elevation at a certain point, a clump of timber here, a ravine there, a hill or a creek of too small import to attract the attention of the civil engineer, may be of vital importance in a battle. Even if all these facts were known to an advancing army, there are things liable to change, like the position of a confronting army, the numbers, the bridges, the state of the roads, and other things equally essential, which the commanding officer must know to be successful. The best way to develop the strength of an enemy is to attack him; but this is the last resort if information is the object, for it is always apt to cost as much as, and sometimes much more than, the knowledge is worth.

During the war there were two sources of information

which our generals availed themselves of, and which may be called the regular and the irregular. Under the head of the irregular, and in the reverse order of importance, may be named the following: First, the refugees, who, from patriotic or selfish motives, were continually pouring into our lines from the direction of the enemy. They were generally a very ignorant class of people, with false ideas of distance and exaggerated notions of numbers. If a refugee said that he "saw with his own eyes an army of fifty thousand men" at a certain place and marching in a certain direction, it might generally be credited that the enemy was at that point, and marching in the direction named, but the numbers could never be relied on. Another source of information was the deserters, who were always escaping to our lines—sometimes southern Union men, sometimes northern men, who, residing South when the war broke out, were impressed into the rebel service; and then again the criminals and unprincipled dregs of the southern army, escaping from the guard-house and justice. The information they gave had to be weighed and sifted with great caution, and accepted in proportion to the intelligence of the informant and the probable cause for desertion. Indeed, this was one of the safest ways to get a spy into the opposing lines, though deserters were guarded as closely as prisoners. Valuable knowledge of the enemy could be gained by comparing the examinations of a number of deserters, but as a rule no men knew less about the armies on either side than the great body of the privates. This was particularly true of the rebels. They knew the strength of their own companies or regiments, and the brigade, division, and

corps to which they belonged, but beyond that, nothing.

No person was the object of so much ridicule during the war as "the reliable contraband," and yet some of these people furnished the most valuable information to the Union generals. As a rule only the most intelligent escaped into the Federal lines, and they, in many cases, were waiters in gentlemen's families or officers' servants. The negro may not be able to perceive ideas or analyze motives as quickly as a white man, but he is certainly his superior in the memory of words and conversations. So far, then, as the black man repeated what he heard—and one acquainted with those people could easily detect any interpolations—his statements could be credited, and the fact that he heard a certain person say so might be relied on. In speaking about what he saw himself there was the same tendency to exaggeration in the negro as in the white refugee.

Another source of information, and of the most valuable kind, was that obtained from captured mails or intercepted dispatches. The supply of information from the sources named was often valuable, but always uncertain, and when most needed, the enemy's lines were most strictly guarded, so that it was difficult to pass them. Each army, however, was made independent of these sources of supplying information by its own organized secret service corps—known in the army but little, outside of the army not at all. So when a citizen read of a victory won, he never for a moment thought of the cool daring of some fearless scout who carried from the enemy's lines the secret of his weakness, and gave half the victory before a gun was fired.

There is a great difference between the spy and the scout as such. The scout is always a soldier, detailed by virtue of his knowledge of the country or peculiar fitness for his position. He is usually mounted and always armed. He operates alone or with his companions on the front, flanks, and often the rear of the enemy, picking up stragglers, capturing mails, intercepting dispatches, burning bridges, and frequently harassing the enemy by sudden onsets in considerable numbers. To accomplish a dangerous enterprise the scouts were often led to dress in the most ambiguous uniforms, frequently in that of the enemy, though any dress, not a Federal uniform, could be made to pass for that of a rebel soldier. The Union scouts were as well acquainted with the regiments and brigades of the enemy as they were with those of their own people, and they often carried passes signed by rebel officers of rank. In detailing men for this hazardous business, courage and coolness were not the only requisites; a knowledge of the country, of the people, of the negro character, and the reproachful terms used against the Union troops, was necessary. The best scouts on the Union side were southern men, or men who had resided long enough in the South to understand the people. To the eminently successful scout another great requisite was education, so that he might be able to note and classify every fact of importance.

The spy was a different individual as a rule. He was not a soldier, for no officer could order a man to do work that he could not protect him in if captured. Many were spies from the noblest motives, but the majority were prompted by that love of reward which leads men to face death in a thousand forms in the

hope of gain. He assumed the garb and face of a friend. He blended with his foes, and sometimes occupied some civil position in connection with the army. While the Union army had a fine system of this kind, it was very imperfect compared with the efficiency of the rebel secret service. The spies of the South were posted from the Gulf to the White House.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HOME AT GONZELLETTA.

It was a beautiful evening in the latter part of June, 1861, and Mrs. Boardman and her daughter were seated on the gallery, as when our story begins. They had been talking about the death of Mr. Warren and the sad funeral which they had that day attended. They wondered where Robert was, but concluded he had reached Kentucky, as the efforts to capture him, of which they had heard, proved fruitless. Their conversation was disturbed by the arrival of Henderson Townsend, whose coarse, cunning face was not made more attractive by the evident good humor which he felt. Both rose and bowed coldly as he ascended the steps, but he took no notice of their manner. Seating himself, he pulled a newspaper from his pocket, and, glancing at a paragraph which was made conspicuous by a pencil mark, he said, as his greasy face opened in the form of laugh without a sound,

“I have some news here—news about Robert Warren! Would yeh like to hear it?” Looking at Amy, he continued, “Coz, if yeh would, sit down an I’ll let yeh read it.”

“Amy’s face grew deathly pale, and she felt giddy for an instant, but, recovering herself, she sat down beside her mother.

Mrs. Boardman took her daughter's cold hand in hers and said,

"Mr. Townsend, I am interested, with my daughter, in Mr. Warren, and should be pleased to hear any good news you have to bring us."

"Good news!" chuckled Townsend; "Wall, I reckon it's jest 'bout the best news I've heard for many a day. Miss Amy, yeh knows I've allus been your friend?"

Townsend tried to look seriously sentimental, but succeeded in looking stupid and brutal, as he uttered his assertion in the tone of a question.

"Please let that go, and tell us what you know about Mr. Warren," said Amy, earnestly.

"Wall, now, Miss Amy, Bob Warren was n't a bad sort of a feller. Some things I liked 'bout him, even if he did try ter kill me. I liked him, Miss Amy, on your account, particularly since yeh ordered me out of this house. I ain't been in since, yeh know."

"For mercy's sake, Mr. Townsend, tell me what you know. Please let me have that paper," and Amy reached out her hand with an imploring look.

Townsend held the paper in his freckled hand, and, although too far off for Amy to reach it, he suddenly pulled it back, and, folding it up, put it in his pocket.

"Miss Amy, I'll let you see it bimeby, but yeh knows I'm yehr friend, and do n't want ter give yeh pain. I'll let yeh see it, but yeh've got ter answer a question first; will yeh?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Townsend," said Amy, earnestly; "only be quick, please be quick!"

"Yes, yehr mighty oneasy, Miss Amy, I see. But supposin' now Robert Warren should n't never come

back, supposin' he was drowned and I could prove it, and wuz to go on ter Cadder Lake, and bring his body home, an' bury him 'long side the ole man, would yeh like me any the better for it?"

Townsend had been speaking with his eyes fixed on the lash of his whip, which he was twisting like a snake on the floor. He waited for an answer for some seconds, and looking up he saw Amy's face pale as death, her eyes closed, and her head resting on her mother's breast, while Mrs. Boardman, speechless with alarm, was motioning to a servant who stood in the door. The black girl, evidently as much frightened as Mrs. Boardman, expressed her feelings in a prolonged scream, as she saw the corpse-like face of her young mistress, and rushed toward her.

Mrs. Boardman whispered intensely,

"Quick, Kitty! water! bring water!"

Kitty's scream had attracted the household, and water was soon procured, and the fainting girl restored to consciousness.

As she opened her eyes and saw the anxious face of her mother above her, she whispered,

"God is too good. I can't believe it. Oh, mother, you do n't believe it?"

"No, my child; I can't believe it," and Mrs. Boardman's eyes did not corroborate her words, for they sought the paper protruding from Townsend's pocket.

Amy saw the glance, and turned to Townsend, who looked frightened and guilty. He heard what she had said, and, without any regard for her feelings, and a vulgar desire to confirm what he had hinted at before, he stood up, drew out the paper, selected the

paragraph, and handed it to Mrs. Boardman. Amy drew it down, and both read :

“RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE! Mr. Rose, while hunting on the eastern shore of the lake, a few days since, found the skeleton of a horse, and several articles of clothing that had evidently been washed on shore some time ago. One of the articles was a shirt, and was marked ‘Robert Warren.’ There can be no further doubt about the fate of the fugitives who were taken to the island by that renegade, Tennessee, last spring, intending to secrete them. All three must have perished in the flood that seemed sent by an avenging God to destroy men fleeing from justice. Mr. Rose thinks that by a little search in the canebrake he would have found the skeletons; but we say let them rot in the beds of the alligators, after the buzzards have picked the bones, and let our feelings be joy that justice has overtaken villainy, sorrow that the gallows is cheated.”

Both read the paragraph over, then re-read it, and Mrs. Boardman stooped and kissed her daughter. Then, handing Townsend the paper, she asked,

“Is that all the evidence you have of Robert Warren’s death?”

“Well,” replied Townsend, “if that do n’t satisfy you, nothing will, ’cept fotchin’ the skeleton here and showin’ it ter yeh.”

“No, sir; and that would not prove the identity of the skeleton. Robert Warren was used to floods. He swam the San Bernard when it flowed a mile wide. He saved Johnson—Cooper Johnson—when no man would venture to his aid on the Brazos. Robert Warren is living, and you, sir, will yet see him and know it to your cost.”

Townsend grew a livid ash color, as Mrs. Boardman's ringing voice ceased, and he managed to stammer:

"I don't want it ter be true; I'd rather not see Warren dead."

"You would rather not see him dead?" said Amy, now restored, and the color returning to her cheeks. "You, who tried like a cringing coward to assassinate him! How dare you, sir, come into the presence of Robert Warren's friends with such a lie in your mouth?"

Townsend walked backward down the steps, as if to be prepared for some attack, and when he reached his horse he shouted:

"Do yeh both see these eyes?" drawing his hand across them as if to point out the location of his watery vision. "*These eyes, so help me God, will be blasted and dead before they ever rest on Bob Warren!*"

Townsend uttered these words with a fiendish energy, that sent a cold thrill through the ladies and the wondering servants. Then he mounted, and, driving his spurs into his mustang, with an oath that hissed between his gritted teeth, he galloped for the road.

The confident tone, assumed before Townsend, vanished on his disappearance, and till long after dark both mother and daughter sat on the gallery expressing hope to each other, which their own hearts doubted, and forming theories to account for the newspaper article, which went to prove that the clothing and dead horse might have been on the shore from a hundred different causes, and Robert and his friends be still safe. Yet both had received

a terrible blow, and were more than half prepared for the worst that might follow.

They decided to say nothing about the object of Townsend's visit to Mrs. Warren or Mary for the present. The death of Mr. Warren, though expected for some weeks, was none the less difficult to bear, and even the black shadow of this late loss would be more than they could endure.

During the long summer months Mrs. Boardman and her daughter kept their secret, and, by daily visits and constant attentions, they were a great blessing to Mrs. Warren and Mary.

In the latter part of September a visitor called on Mrs. Warren. He was a short, thick-set man, about fifty years of age, with a very thick neck, in which swelled cords could be seen in the red skin, looking as if he were holding his breath with an effort, or as if the black silk cravat, folded around the very narrow collar, were choking him. His mud-dark eyes would confirm such a suspicion, for they protruded from the sockets as if about to pop out. His chin and cheeks were beardless, and seemed of a piece and color with his neck. There evidently was not enough skin to cover both and admit of any curves at the cheeks or chin, for they dropped with the thick neck in a straight line. He wore a moustache, that bristled like a piece of decayed blacking brush, under a flat pug nose, with two large nostrils, that looked as if they terminated in a very black cavern in the back of his head. He wore a silk hat, very high and napless, with a very narrow rim, and a turret of very rusty crape above it. His clothes had evidently been made when he was much more slender, for his arms

fitted his coat sleeves like smoked blood puddings, and his waist necessitated two loop buttons, that vainly strove to bring the edges of his coat together over his protruding stomach. His vest had an apparent antipathy to his pants, and crawled up under his arms, every button buttoned, and his pants reciprocated, going down so as to leave a very wide isthmus of shirt between the two. His legs were short and badly proportioned, three-fourths the length of the sausage-looking extremities being below his knees, where they terminated in a pair of shoes well blacked, and, judging from their knotty, irregular shape about the toes, their owner was a martyr to bunyons.

This was “William Wallace Gasting, esq., Confederate States receiver for the southern counties of Texas, headquarters Richmond, Fort Bend County.”

Mr. Gasting could not ride on horseback; no man in Texas walks, so he drove about in a buggy, and thought the buggy more professional for a lawyer. He was the man who had married Mary's New England governess. He was himself from Philadelphia, and was reputed to be wealthy in cattle and slaves. In '57 he was in the legislature, but all previous honors paled before the new one conferred upon him by the Confederate States government.

Mr. Gasting was announced, and as he entered the parlor Mrs. Warren rose to receive him, but he waived her with a majestic air to a seat, blew his nose on a flaming red handkerchief with a sound like the first two notes of a cavalry charge. Then running two fingers around between his throat and his collar, and stretching up his neck as if he wished to crawl out of his wrapping, like a very large turtle in a very small

shell, Mr. Gasting coughed, sat down, with his ivory-headed cane between his legs, and his hat on top of his cane, and fumbled with his disengaged hand in his breast coat pocket. William Wallace Gasting spoke in a voice that was very sharp and thin, sounding as if it originated in the back part of his mouth, his thick throat being too full to admit even a sound without bursting :

“ Mrs. Warren, I visit you to-day on strictly professional business, madam. Very sorry that sympathies and duties should be antagonistic.”

Mr. Gasting struggled with his necktie and looked at Mrs. Warren as if he expected her to say something, and seeing that she was about to say something, he sympathetically cleared his own throat by another little cough.

“ What may be your pleasure in visiting me professionally, Mr. Gasting?” asked Mrs. Warren, as Mary, in her mourning dress, entered the room.

“ I have no pleasure of my own, madam. I am the servant of the country. I come to obey the mandates of my superiors, and to do that well will ever be my greatest pleasure.”

Mr. Gasting struggled with his cravat, and turned his protruding eyes inquiringly on Mrs. Warren as he concluded this patrotic speech.

“ And what are the mandates of your superiors that you should come to my house professionally, Mr. Gasting?”

“ To *your* house? Did I understand you to say to *your* house, madam?”

Seeing that Mr. Gasting needed a reply, from his violent struggles, Mrs. Warren intimated that she meant “ her house.”

“I did not come to *your* house, madam! This abode and the surrounding property, lately in the ownership of Robert Warren, senior, now deceased, and bequeathed to his son Robert, excepting the widow’s dower, is by me declared confiscated to the Confederate States government, whose receiver I am for the southern district of Texas.”

Mr. Gasting felt easier after this, for he coughed, walked to the window and spit out on the gallery; then wriggling his neck through his collar, he sat down.

Mrs. Warren, with her white, thin hands clasped on her knees, looked at Mr. Gasting without uttering a word. That gentleman waited till the silence became painful, when he continued:

“Our government, madam, in its magnanimity, has decided that those who sympathize with the fanatics of the North shall receive safe conduct across the lines. At the same time it has wisely concluded to seize for its own use such houses, lands, or other real property as the person may be possessed of in the limits of the Confederate States, and any debts owed to such persons by any citizen of the Confederate States must hereafter be paid to the Confederate States receiver, and any money owed to parties North is also confiscated for the use of the aforesaid Confederate States.”

“Do I understand, Mr. Gasting, that you are authorized to turn me out of my house simply because my deceased husband and fugitive son sided with their country?” asked Mrs. Warren, in a calm voice, with her dark eyes turned on Mr. Gasting.

“Madam, you are naturally prejudiced in favor of your husband and son. You do not comprehend the offenses of which the nation judges them guilty. The

law is inflexible." Mr. Gasting struggled with his necktie and coughed till the veins stood like cords on his fat forehead.

In the same quiet voice, Mrs. Warren said :

"Mr. Gasting, I always thought a trial was necessary before a person was judged guilty. I have no power to oppose you ; I can only say that one-half the land comprising Mr. Warren's estate belongs to my daughter Mary, and one-half the people on this place. Consequently you can only confiscate my son's half."

"Very true, madam ; but your son's half includes the cultivated portion of the plantation, on which this house stands. I might sieze all the rest, for in my opinion your husband could not make a will after the passage of the act of confiscation. The regard my wife bears your daughter, however, prompts me to step from the line of duty and accept Mr. Warren's will, as recently admitted to probate. The personal property, included by the words household furniture, I think you can retain."

Mr. Gasting straightened up and tried to look philanthropic, and concluded by adjusting the flimsy line of collar squeezed above the black cravat.

"How long can we remain here, sir?" asked Mrs. Warren, a perceptible tremor in her voice.

"One week, madam, or till after the sale," said Mr. Gasting. Then taking from his pocket a brown envelope, with a red seal at each corner and one in the middle, he handed it to Mrs. Warren, informing her it was his commission as "Confederate States receiver." She held it in her hand and looked at him, while he stood up and coughed with more than usual importance and looked more than usually red.

Then he spoke with greater deliberation, looking around him all the time, as if addressing a large audience.

"I, William Wallace Gasting, Confederate States receiver for the Southern district of the State of Texas, by virtue of the power in me vested, do now and hereby seize, for the sole use of the Confederate States of America, the houses, lands, negroes, cattle, and all other property whatsoever, bequeathed to Robert Warren, junior, by his father, Robert Warren, senior; and I do further declare that, on the first Monday in October, proximo, I will sell all such property, at public auction, for the benefit of the Confederate States before named."

Mr. Gasting took his hat off his stick and coughed himself purple. He looked at Mrs. Warren as if he wished her to speak, but her white, thin hands were still clasped on her black dress and her eyes cast on the ground. Mr. Gasting turned and said: "Good day, madam," and Mrs. Warren whispered "Good day," while the Confederate States receiver hurried to his buggy with the air of a man who had just performed a most praiseworthy act.

With Mr. Warren dead and Robert unheard from; with their once happy home torn from them, and the black, cold future before them, the mother and daughter sat in the room for some minutes without speaking. They were crushed; and as Mrs. Warren realized the utter loneliness of her position, in a low wail, she called out:

"Oh, my God! my God! take me, take me!"

Mary rose quickly and clasped her mother to her breast, and the kiss of the loving daughter opened the fountains of the aching heart, and both women mingled their tears, and each tried to cheer the other.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FOUR WOMEN IN COUNCIL.

About an hour after Mr. Gasting left, Mrs. Boardman and Amy came over to Mrs. Warren's on their daily visit. Mrs. Boardman was astonished to see the fresh evidences of grief on the faces of her friends, and at first feared that Mrs. Warren might have heard the story about Robert's death. She soon learned the true state of the case, and, though she felt keenly for her friend, she was rejoiced that it was no worse. She had long desired to have Mrs. Warren and Mary with her, and now she would have an opportunity to carry out her plans. Amy was much more excited, and felt like declaring war upon Mr. Gasting at once, for she said :

“Don't give up the place, Mrs. Warren. Stay here, and mother and I will remain with you; and if that hideous Gasting comes again we will put him out. He must not take your home and break your heart, and rob Robert.”

Amy might have continued in this excited strain had not her sobs choked her utterance, and tears come to her relief.

“It will do no good to oppose them, dear Amy,” said Mrs. Warren in a sad tone; “we are only women, and if you and your mother took decided action in my behalf it might result in the loss of your own home.”

“Let them take it if they dare!” said the spirited girl. “Robert will be back soon, and then I do not think they will wish to retain what they have stolen.”

Mrs. Boardman laid her hand with a gentle restraint upon Amy’s arm and said :

“My dear Mrs. Warren, I have long wished that we might live all together till after the war, but I did not ask you while I knew there were so many cares to detain you here. I cannot think it wise to oppose those people in any way ; so get everything you desire to move in readiness, and send them to my house, and then come yourself. It is your only alternative, for I am sure that heartless man, Gasting, will insist on an immediate sale.”

Mary thanked Mrs. Boardman and agreed that her suggestion was best. Mrs. Warren also consented, and promised to make preparations at once.

During the following week all the plate and more valuable furniture were moved to Mrs. Boardman’s, and Mrs. Warren and Mary only waited for the sale in order to leave. In the meantime a number of men from Houston had called to examine the property and ask questions about the hands, the stock, and other purchasable articles. Mrs. Warren treated them with her usual courtesy and dignity, though it required a great deal of control to meet old Mr. Townsend. He was a long, cadaverous-looking man, with grey eyes and lantern jaws, and a disagreeable whine, with which he closed a sentence with the words “Sure as I live,” or “I don’t prevaricate—honest.”

Townsend owned a fine cotton plantation up the river, and, with his fifty slaves and eight thousand horned cattle, was considered wealthy. Rough and

uneducated, he had great natural shrewdness, and he boasted with truth that he never lost in a bargain. As soon as the confiscation act was passed, he looked greedily on the rich plantation and splendid improvements of "the Warren place," and determined if it was offered for sale to be the purchaser. Among many people in the section there was a strong desire not to trouble Mrs. Warren or her daughter, but to let them remain quietly in possession of their home. But both the Townsends kept alive the old wounds, and invented lies to turn the people against the Warrens, and in this they were to a great extent successful. The elder Townsend learned with unfeigned pleasure of the confiscation of Robert Warren's property, for it gratified his hatred for the man, and more than this, gave him an opportunity to better his condition in the world. His own place was valuable, but he could not retain it and purchase the Warren plantation. He did what a shrewd business man would have done under the circumstances, he sold his own place and parted with his stock in order to secure a property infinitely more valuable. Learning that others had been looking for the property, he frightened them off by showing that in case the Yankees were successful the sale would be worthless and the money lost; but while he spoke of this risk to others he never for a moment permitted himself to doubt the success of the southern cause. Consequently, when the day for the sale came Mr. Townsend had few competitors, and with the exception of a few of the older hands, he succeeded in becoming the owner of the Warren plantation, and master of nearly three hundred slaves—among them Susey and "the pickaninnies."

Mrs. Boardman and Amy did everything for the comfort of their friends, and Mrs. Warren in a few weeks began to improve under their loving care, but Mary became more pale and thoughtful; she would often sit with her hands clasped before her, gazing across the prairie to the old home, and looking at times as if her thoughts were far away from Texas and the world.

One evening as they sat at tea, Mary startled her hearers by saying: "I have an unaccountable desire to leave here and go to Kentucky. I have been thinking about it ever since Gasting's first visit. You remember, mother, he said that those desiring to go North would be passed safely through the lines. Of course *you* could not go. You will be perfectly safe with Mrs. Boardman, and I feel as if this life of actless suspense would kill me."

For a few seconds the little party was struck mute by this proposition of Mary; then Mrs. Boardman said:

"Why, you silly child, it can't be thought of for an instant," and Mrs. Warren, dropping her fork, looked over at Mary with a startled expression, and said: "My daughter, you are all I have in the world; don't leave me; I can't give you up." The warm-hearted, impetuous Amy sprang from her seat and rushing over to her young friend, knelt beside her, and putting her arms around Mary's waist, she said:

"No, no, Mary! you must not leave us. Don't I love you? Yes, we all love you, and want to see you happy."

Mary stooped, and, parting the brown hair, kissed Amy's white forehead, saying:

"My darling sister, what could induce me to doubt

your love? This desire to leave is not an impulse, I have thought it all over, and feel it to be a sacred duty. Now, mother, do not look surprised. Let me explain. Here day after day I feel the desire to do something befitting a woman in this war. I wish it were womanly to risk my life that the war might close the sooner, but it is not. I remember how nobly Florence Nightingale worked for the sick and wounded Crimean soldiers, and what a noble influence her very presence must have had upon them. Now we all get to picturing possibilities to ourselves at times. I do by day, and I dream the same by night. Last night in my sleep I saw Robert carried by four men, and his eyes were closed and the blood dripped from his breast. I thought I asked one of the men if Robert was dead, and he said "no my lady, but fearfully wounded; he wants a kind hand to nurse him—come with us." I woke terribly frightened, and I clasped my hands and asked God to guide me, and when I slept again I heard that tall soldier's voice saying "Come, come."

This statement of Mary had a strange effect on the little audience. The tears stole quietly down Mrs. Warren's cheeks, and Mrs. Boardman fidgeted nervously with her handkerchief, while Amy rose and walked thoughtfully to the window. The silence might have continued some time, had not Amy proposed that they should go out on the gallery. Hardly had they been seated outside, than Mrs. Warren suggested a difficulty which Mary had not foreseen; she said:

"My daughter, I would be willing to give you up if I thought you could reach, in safety, some place

where there are hospitals, but this to me is doubtful. However, the greatest difficulty in the way is the want of means. I know very little about the investments of your father, even if they were available, and I do not think I have more than one hundred dollars in money, and this is much too small a sum for you to undertake your journey on."

Mrs. Boardman drew nearer to Mary and said, "My dear child, I appreciate your motives very much, and under the circumstances, if assured of your safety, I would be willing to let you go. Unfortunately at this time I am very short of money. I cannot realize now on the cotton which is being gathered, and Mr. Gilles, my Galveston agent, did not sell my last year's crop, for motives that to him seemed prudent. I can get you, if you persist in going, a few hundred dollars; you should have, however, fully one thousand."

While they were talking darkness came on, and unperceived a black woman came up the road and stood beside Mary on the gallery. She might have stood for some time unnoticed had not her sobs attracted Mary's attention, and she turned to take Susey's black hand, and to receive on her own the tears and kisses of the faithful servant.

"Oh, Miss Mary!" she began, "I 'se mighty glad to see yeh. 'Pears like an age since yeh luffed de house, an' all 's berry lonely now, Miss Mary." Susey kissed the hand of her young mistress again, and then went over to Mrs. Warren and said: "Miss Ellen, how 's yeh? Strong, I hope, an' a trustin' in de Lor'."

Mrs. Warren assured her that she was feeling better, and that she looked to God for comfort.

"How are the people getting on, Susey, under Mr. Townsend?" asked Mary.

"Dey's doin' well 's kin be 'spected, Miss. Mauss Townsend tole Dolp yesterday that Mr. Gasting had bought his old place, an' that he was agoin' to sell all de hans what did n't do well."

"I hope, under those circumstances," said Mary, "that the people will be careful, for I have no doubt Mr. Townsend means what he said."

"Yeh ain't heerd nothin' from Mauss Robut an' de pickanins, hes yeh?" asked Susey.

"Nothing," said Mary, "but I feel confident Robert will come back before very long, and we will return to the old home," said Mary.

"But, Miss Mary, Archy 'll be back too, won't he?" asked Susey in a supplicating tone.

"Oh, yes, Susey, Archy will of course return with his master."

"Then," said Susey, "my heart 'll larf wid joy, an' de pickaninnies will meet him at de doah."

Mary then took Susey to the end of the gallery and told her of her intention to leave, and seek out Robert, at the same time explaining the great difficulty arising from the want of money.

"Miss Mary," said Susey, "Yeh knows I love yeh like my own soul."

"I know that, Susey," said Mary, laying her hand on the black arm of her late servant.

"Well, Miss Mary," continued Susey, "I did 'nt know yeh was agoin' to leave, but I know 'd yeh must n't have much money. Jes' afore Archy left, ole mauss gave him a lot of money, an' Archy says to me, 'Susey, dar's more 'n I want; take de half, yeb may want it, poor chile.' So I took it, an' I'se

allus carried it here in my breast, Miss Mary, more fur Archy like. An' when I come'd over to-day, I was agoin' to give it to yeh. Now, Miss Mary, I wants yeh to take it. Do n't say nothin', it's all fur you," and Susey took the two hundred dollars in gold from her breast and forced it into her young mistress's hand.

"Why, Susey, I cannot take your money. Keep it; no doubt if Mr. Townsend remains your master you will need it before long," said Mary, handing back the cotton stocking in which Susey had rolled the money.

"No, please, Miss Mary. Oh, do take it and use it. Yeh can get it all back fur me when Mauss Robut an' Archy comes back. Heah, Miss, do please take it from Aunt Susey," and the black woman forced back the money with an earnest pressure into the hand of her young mistress, adding, "May de good Lor' bless yeh, Miss Mary, and may we be happy agin in de ole home." So saying, Susey again kissed the white hand, and bidding the others good-bye, hurriedly left the gallery and walked out the straight road across the prairie.

During this time Texas was free from the dangers and excitements incident to the States east of the Mississippi. At times there were rumors of the Yankee fleets attacking Galveston, or landing large armies on some other point of the coast. While there were thousands of Union men in the State, not one dared, after the secession, to speak his sentiments. Hamilton, Anderson, and other leaders had fled. Hundreds had been hung or died in prison, and thus forced by public opinion into the Confederate armies. The business of the State was not suspended, for a large

trade was carried on with Mexico, and gold was always in circulation in the State. Long trains laden with cotton were daily sent to Brownsville on the Rio Grande, and returned, laden with foreign supplies to Houston. A remarkable feature in this business was that, while many of the goods were intended for Louisiana and States even across the Mississippi, where salt, leather, and medicine were needed, still the greater part of the supplies imported into Texas—and the same is true of every southern State—were the luxuries, like wines, silks, perfumes, and the latest fashionable apparel for ladies. The Confederate States government knew this tendency of the people, and enacted laws controlling imports.

A week rolled by after Mary had announced her intention to leave Texas, and nearly every hour in the day the subject which engrossed her constant thoughts was reverted to. Mrs. Boardman became convinced at last that it would be better to let Mary go, and to this Mrs. Warren and Amy finally assented, and plans were considered for her journey.

At that time a journey to Tennessee or Kentucky would have been no ordinary undertaking for even a strong man, and it was much more difficult for a young girl who had never learned even to help herself. One thousand miles to where the Union armies were—a long journey even with every facility. But the blockade had stopped the steamers from Galveston to New Orleans, and there was no continued railroad communication with any of the Mississippi towns. Indeed there was no line of stages running to the river, and a traveler would be compelled to hire private conveyances the greater part of the distance. But there was a will and a way.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE JOURNEY TO TENNESSEE.

Mary had fully determined to carry out her plans, and her friends ceased to offer opposition. Preparations were made for the journey, and the four ladies for days consulted the large map of the United States hanging in the library. Never did generals in a council of war more carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of every suggested plan. After much study it was decided that the best course lay through the range of the Sabine River, thence through Louisiana to the Mississippi, and up the Mississippi to Vicksburg or Memphis. One trunk was considered enough, and it was agreed that she should take, for appearance sake and assistance, one of Mrs. Boardman's servants, a stout boy named Tom, about fourteen years of age. Amy insisted on accompanying her friend to Orange, which was the terminus of the railroad running east from Houston.

It was difficult for both Mrs. Warren and Mary to part. They had never been separated, and yet the blow was not so hard as if it had been the first, for gradually the heart becomes acquainted with sorrow. It was eight miles to Columbia, on the Brazos, where they were to take the cars for Houston, and the carriage was waiting and the farewells uttered with sobs,

when Susey appeared, out of breath, to bid her young mistress good-bye.

"Oh, Miss Mary, if I could only go 'long to keer fur an' watch yeh, an' to see Archy an' Mauss Robut."

"Don't fret, Susey," said Mary, the tears flowing down her own cheeks. "I will come back before long with Robert and Archy, and we will all live happily in the old home."

"Oh, I prays de Lor' fur dat. Come soon, or I can't lib. Yesterday, Mauss Townsend whipped me kase I spoke 'bout de ole mauss, an' I'se so sore I can't stan' skeerce." Then changing her tone, she said: "But whin yeh sees Archy, don't tell him, miss. Jes' say Susey's well, an' de pickaninnies is awaitin'. An', Miss Mary, if 't ain't no trubbel, jes' gib Archy dese socks, an' say I knit 'em at night whin de chillen wuz a-sleepin'."

Mary promised to take the socks to Archy. Farewells were given again, and the carriage rolled over the prairie, and Mrs. Warren, on the gallery, gave full vent to her suppressed grief.

So busy were the girls with their own thoughts that but little was said as the carriage dashed along to Columbia. A few miles below the town they struck the muddy, winding Brazos, with its sleepy waters and steep clay banks, covered with a dense and tropical vegetation.

Reaching Columbia, a straggling village of some six hundred inhabitants, they learned from Mr. Cole, a kind-hearted merchant, that it would be necessary to have passes, and these he promised to secure from the provost marshal, a man named Church.

The people who fought in the South were southern

men by birth, or espoused the cause from principle. The majority of the military non-combatants were northern men, and they were quartermasters, purveyors, or provost marshals in nine cases out of ten. It was a safe way of showing their love for the Confederacy. Mr. Church was no exception to the rule; he was a Yankee by birth and a southern man from selfish motives. He would have been a cannibal, with his relatives for victims, had it paid.

After much trouble the conscientious marshal was induced to give the two young ladies passes to Orange and back, to expire in four days, and he charged them for his generosity the moderate sum of ten dollars. By 11 o'clock in the morning they dismissed the carriage, crossed the ferry to the railroad station, secured tickets for themselves and Tom, and took seats in the very shabby and dilapidated car which was supposed to be "reserved for ladies," but into which, as a consequence, all the men without ladies crowded.

The railroad to Houston was never a good one, owing to the scarcity of stone or gravel in that region for ballast. Since the war it was particularly bad, and the greatest speed the cars dared make on it in dry weather was eight miles an hour. Frequently the train was detained while the black brakemen cut wood for the locomotive, or carried up water in buckets from some muddy bayou to the tender. It was very tiresome going the sixty-three miles to Houston, and Mary ventured to ask an old gentleman who sat behind her at what time he thought they would reach Houston.

The old gentleman spit out of the window to clear his mouth, and wiping his grey beard with his coat sleeve, said:

"Yes, miss, that depen's on circumstances. They have a new set of han's on this train, an' they are doin' right well, I think, but the ole han's used to stop to chuse wild turkeys along the road, so it made the trip right smart weary. One time the engineer an' fireman went off with the brakesman and conductor after deer, an' all han's got down to Oyster Creek an' got drunk."

"But what did the passengers do?" asked Amy in some alarm.

"Oh, miss, they knowed it was a joke, though they cussed right smart. Howdsomdever, we went back to ole Stephens, an' got a mule team an' hauled one of the cars down agin to Columbia. We had a gay time that night, miss," and the ole man laughed at the memory of the festive occasion.

"Do you imagine, sir, that anything will happen to prevent our getting in before dark?" asked Mary nervously.

"I do n't know miss, I hope not," said the old man. But I see thar's a stiff breeze a blowin' frum the east; if it goes aroun' south why we'll jest fly to Houston; if it goes north or northeast, it'll be slap agin us, an' we'll have to come to anchor. Why bless you, I've often stopped all night on these here prairies with a head wind. Once we wuz two hull days out without anything to eat an' nothin' to drink but water. We all got so hungry we'd have eaten a raw baby. Since then, miss, I allus carries three days' pervisions."

"But the train used to go much faster, I am sure, for I have been over the road frequently," said Mary.

"Yes, yer right miss, but I reckon as how that was afore the war; now the track is all willow-wallerey

like, an' no one seems to keer fur fixin' it. Now jist lissen to that ole engine," said the grey-headed man, putting his head out of the window. "Do ye hear her a wheezin'? Wall, if she don't bust in a week I'll eat her," and the old man drew his coat sleeve across his mouth as if to prepare for the feast, and then added, "Howdsomdever, we kin git along better without any engines."

Mary looked doubtingly at the old man, who, deeming an explanation necessary, said, "Wall, ye see I'd have sails on the cars an' go up at night, whin the wind comes frum the Gulf, an' then come back in the mornin' whin the wind's off land."

The young ladies could not help smiling at this novel idea, and for some time the conversation dropped. After an hour's dull riding, and while the train was stopped for wood, the old man walked to the end of the car, looked out, and came back. He was about sixty years of age, rather stout, and of medium height. His dress was coarse, his boots heavy and dirty, and his hands large and tanned. He looked like one of the lower order of southern whites, but under his coarse appearance there was an expression of kindness, and an easy, good-natured sort of indecision. Mary thought as he came back that she recognized him as "Cooper Johnson," a poor man with a very large family of ignorant daughters living in Columbia, and the same person whom Robert had saved at one time when the Brazos was flooded. He worked in the sugar plantations along the river, and was looked upon as a good-natured, lazy sort of a man, who never gave a thought to the morrow. He was a Tennessean, or claimed to be, but he was of

so little importance that nobody seemed to care for his antecedents. Since the war, however, he had become an object of some note. He was a strong southern man in his feelings, as he would have been anything else to oblige his neighbors, and he was never so happy as when in a bar-room he would say :

“Now, gentlemen, it ain’t my fault ; my family should not be disgraced kase my brother is a Yankee. We never did hitch well, fur Andy wuz allus an onery cuss, an’ I ’m not surprised he ’s a traitor to his country.”

Cooper Johnson was a brother of no less a person than Andrew Johnson, then a United States Senator and the military governor of Tennessee.

It was nearly dark when the train reached Houston, and though both the young ladies had visiting acquaintances there, they preferred, under the circumstances, to go to the Verandah Hotel, where they obtained a pleasant room for the night. On the following morning they took the train for Orange, which place they reached in the evening. All the hotels were crowded, and the young ladies searched in vain for a place to stop all night. Their inquiries attracted the attention of a young artillery officer, who generously offered them his room, and learning that one of the young ladies was going on to Haines’s Bluff he promised to get her a ticket in the morning, and have her trunk taken to the steamboat going north. There was no alternative but to accept this kind offer, and on learning their intention the young officer had the room prepared and the baggage of the young ladies taken to it.

The two anxious hearts were wonderfully disguised

as they beat side by side in the little bed-room that night. There was an attempt to laugh at their situation, though both felt like crying, and as Mary thought of the long journey and the indefinite course before her, she secretly wished herself back at Gonzelletta. They slept but little during the night, for there were a hundred things to talk about, and air-castles to build for their future abode. Next morning they were up before the sun, and everything was in readiness. They had an early breakfast, of which neither could eat, and then they sat down to await the arrival of the young officer, who promised to see Mary to the steamer and afterwards escort Amy to the train, for, seeing his gentlemanly bearing, the girls trusted him with this part of their secret.

"I have been thinking, dear Amy," said Mary, as they sat with their hands embraced, "that you ought to take Tom back with you. I am sure I shall be able to get along, and I do not like the idea of your going home alone."

"You dear, unselfish old thing," said Amy, kissing her, "why I will be safely at home to-morrow night, and there are ever so many hundred miles before you. Tom used to be my body-guard, and he is a very strong boy with a good heart, and so very funny sometimes. By the way, he was a birthday present to me, and I will now transfer him to you, to be yours forever. You know, you old darling," she continued, toying with Mary's black hair, "that in addition to Tom's being able to manage your trunk, you will have more attention shown you if you travel with a servant."

So the disposition of Tom was settled. Then Amy

walked to the window, and opening a silk purse she poured the contents into her lap and began to count. She had ninety-three dollars. Twelve would take her home, but in case of accident she would take sixteen. She then put seventy-five dollars back into the purse, and walking to the bed, where Mary was sitting, she put her arms around her, and said :

“Now, old pet, I have a request to make, and if you do not grant it, I will not kiss you for ever so long,” and Amy finished her sentence with a kiss.

“Yes, yes, dear Amy, I will grant you any request in the world,” said Mary, returning the warm-hearted girl’s caress.

“Then take this,” handing her the purse, “and use it for me on the road. Now, not a word. Mother always gives me more money than I need, and, like a little miser, I had this put away. Tell Robert he must pay me when he comes back, or give me a—a—what do you call those things, you know, where you promise to pay money—Mrs. Gasting used to teach us about them?”

Mary suggested, laughingly, “a note.”

“Oh, yes, a note—and now you are a darling and just the sweetest, prettiest sister I ever want to have.”

Mary held the purse in her hand, with her head cast down and her parted lips trembling. Two great tears swelled on her long lashes, and then she turned and threw her arms around Amy. The embrace was returned, and though for awhile each tried to restrain her tears, the emotions were stronger than the wills, and they wept in each other’s arms. Before they could dry their tears a servant came up with Captain Brown’s card, on which he had penciled his “com-

pliments, and the boat will start in fifteen minutes." They put on their things hurriedly, directed the servant to have the trunk sent to the boat, a duty the captain had attended to. Then they descended and found the captain waiting, and learning there was plenty of time to walk to the boat, the three started toward the river. The captain, on reaching the steamer, had Mary's trunk checked and secured her ticket, promising to see Amy off on the train which left in half an hour for Houston. Then the paddles of the steamboat played around, and she strained the great ropes that held her to the pier. The escaping steam sounded like a cry of impatience. The bell tolled ten minutes before starting. Then came the farewell, and Mary was left on deck with the wondering black boy. The ropes were loosed, there was a loud hoarse whistle, and the steamer backed out and headed up the stream. Amy stood on the pier with the captain, waving God-speeds to her friend, and Mary from the deck answered, till, like a dream, the steamer was lost up the river. Then Amy, with her noble escort, turned to retrace her steps to Gonzelleta.

Up the Sabine, with its sluggish, turbid waters, the steamer glided. There was no interest in its low banks covered with cottonwood trees, and no history or tradition gave character to its many bends and bayous. There is a saying, however, among Texans, that "those who enter the State by the Sabine, and drink of its waters, will never leave Texas, and once at least in their lives they will be guilty of horse-stealing." There were no doubt grounds for this belief in the early history of the State, and it was a

good thought to cast the blame on the waters. For a long time Mary sat musing and watching the waves from the advancing steamer as they rushed against the muddy shores. The future, the past, and the present blended like a kaleidoscope in her mind, and, turn it as she would, no combination brought comfort to her heart. At length she bethought herself of Tom, and seeking out that worthy, she found him leaning over the side of the steamer, with the end of a huge piece of string in his hand, the end that hung in the water being adorned with a crooked pin, to which was attached a piece of red flannel. In answer to Mary's

“What are you doing here, Tom?” he replied:

“Why, Miss Mary, I'se a fishin' fur muds, an', if I 'm right smart, I reckon I'll have a big pile fur mammy by the time she gets home.”

She brought him back to her former place, and said, as she made him sit down beside her:

“Tom, don't you know it will be a very long time before you see your mammy again?”

“Hi, Miss Mary, dat's good!” said Tom, with evident delight, “I does n't git wollopings den frum mammy. You won't wallop me much, will yeh, miss?”

Mary could not repress a smile as she said:

“I hope you will be a good, faithful boy, and need no punishment, Tom.”

“Oh, Lor', Miss Mary, I'll be ever so good, an' I'll tote dat 'ar chist all day,” and Tom started in the direction of the trunk, as if to put his boast into practice, but Mary kindly restrained him, and he went back to fish.

As the steamer neared Haines's Bluff, about noon, an elderly gentleman, accompanied by a beautiful girl about Mary's age, and apparently his daughter, walked past where she sat several times. Stopping at length before her, the gentleman spoke in a general way about the weather, the scenery, the difficulties of travel, and the war. Mary was delighted to find a kind, fatherly person to talk to, and after a few minutes the gentleman sat down, and, with a tone of kindly interest, asked :

“Are you going further than the Bluff, miss? You will pardon the inquiry, but I see you are unattended, excepting your inexperienced servant,” turning toward Tom and smiling. “Should you be going further, I should be happy to aid you.” Then turning to the young lady by his side he said, looking at Mary, “This is my daughter—Miss Louisa Henry, Miss ——”

“Warren,” said Mary.

After the introduction Mary thanked Mr. Henry, and told him she desired to go to Vicksburg.

“That is a long journey for a lady to make alone in such times.”

“Yes, sir; but with me it is imperative. I am going on to see a soldier brother of mine, from whom we have not heard since the war.”

“I am very glad to have met you, for, as I live on Berwick's Bay, from which point steamers go up the Atchafalaya to Vicksburg, I hope to be of some service in getting you North comfortably.”

Mary expressed her thanks to Mr. Henry, and inwardly breathed a prayer to God, who had raised up a friend.

The steamer had now reached Haines's Bluff, a miserable cluster of log houses perched on the muddy bank constituting the town, which rose into importance during the war as the terminus of a stage line running east to New Iberia. There were no accommodations for the great swarm of travelers going in both directions, but, as the weather was fine, hundreds bivouacked under the great trees, or made temporary shelters from the branches. Here was a large camp of Texas recruits preparing to go beyond the Mississippi, and a long train of wagons waiting to take supplies east. All was noise, swagger, and confusion. Mr. Henry found that the limited stage accommodation had been secured weeks ahead, and, as he had no desire to wait his turn, he set about purchasing or hiring a private conveyance. He was unsuccessful in his first attempt. He succeeded, however, in getting a room in one of the log houses for the young ladies, and in procuring something to eat. It was simply impossible for those unaccustomed to every variety of noise to sleep at Haines's Bluff that night. Hundreds of men, under the influence of liquor, or imbued with the bravado peculiar to uneducated men under excitement, made night hideous with their wild yells and drunken orgies, while the mules seemed possessed for the time with the general spirit of recklessness and dissipation, if one might judge from the war of kicks and the din of unmusical brays that added to the uproar and confusion.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUED.

About noon the next day, Mr. Henry succeeded in purchasing a very dilapidated conveyance, from a party who had just come west from Vermillion. Rough and unreliable as the so-called "light wagon" was, it was far superior to the tall, bony, old horse, and brown, ragged harness. The whole, however, was considered a bargain for five hundred dollars, and Mr. Henry would have given more in order to leave Haines's Bluff.

Mary wished Mr. Henry to use her purse in paying for this purchase, but he laughingly told her he would present his account when they had reached the end of their journey.

As the harness and wagon needed repairing, Mr. Henry did not leave the bluff till next morning.

Shortly after daylight they were driving through the pine forest that extends for thirty miles in the direction of Lake Charles. Mr. Henry was seated in front on Mary's trunk, the two girls occupied the single seat, and Tom sat with his feet hanging over the tail-board, clinging on to the sides with both hands. The pine roots made the road very rough, and as one spring was weaker than the other, the wagon leaned to the left with a very rakish look. The horse was very steady, the fire of his youth had

evidently departed, and all his pleasure seemed to be retrospective. He was a wise horse, for he could tell in an instant when any part of the harness broke, and would stop immediately; and this he did, on an average, four times an hour, and invariably with cause. Mr. Henry anticipated trouble in the harness and provided himself with an abundance of buckskin, so that its many mendings made it a marvel of ingenuity, and doubtful as to its original material.

About sunset they reached "Mrs. Williams's Hotel," at Manchester, a town which bore but little resemblance to its British namesake, for it boasted but four buildings, one the hotel, the other an out-kitchen, near which were the stable and blacksmith-shop. All the houses were one-storied, and built of rough pine logs.

The young ladies were very much fatigued, and Mrs. Williams's Hotel offered no promise of ease or luxury. It was erected for the accommodation of the stages, on the principle of giving the smallest amount of comfort for the greatest compensation. Mrs. Williams was a stout, fleshy woman, very commanding in her manner, and evidently accustomed to having her own way. She met Mr. Henry at the door of her log caravansary, and informed him that all the beds were taken for the night, but she could make it comfortable for the young ladies on the gallery, by fencing off a portion with a bed-quilt.

It was the best Mrs. Williams could do in the sleeping line, but she promised to make up by preparing an extraordinary supper. If our party had not been hungry after their long, rough journey, the sight of Mrs. Williams's supper table would have disgusted

them. For, though everything was reasonably clean, the great piles of fried yams, and islands of bacon floating in little seas of liquid fat, with thick corn-dodgers and very strong butter, could only be inviting to those who preferred quantity to quality.

It was quite novel for the young ladies to sleep "half out doors," as Tom called the gallery, but the beds were luxurious to the weary heads, and Mr. Henry having arranged the cots with a blanket curtain separating the gallery apartments, he got a blanket for Tom, and early in the evening the whole party was asleep.

Mr. Henry slept less soundly than the young ladies, for he rose frequently during the night, and pushing back the screen looked at the sleeping girls. Once he was aroused by hearing Mary's voice as if in conversation, with no person replying. He could not help listening, as the poor girl, dreaming that her journey was over, and that she was with Robert again, told all her woes and hopes. At times Mary's voice sank to a murmur, and low sobs, as if from her aching heart, choked her utterance. Heretofore Mr. Henry had carefully avoided drawing Mary into a recital of the details that led to her journey, but as he heard the sad tale from the lips of the unconscious girl the tears rose to his eyes, and he stole to the head of the cot where the girls were sleeping, and brushing aside the screen again, he bowed and touched his lips to the brow of each.

Early next morning the tall horse, equipped in the ragged harness, was hitched to the frail, light wagon, and the journey was resumed. In the afternoon they emerged from the pine woods, the road leading into

the open prairie country which stretched before them for two hundred and fifty miles to the banks of the Bayou Teche. The prairies were brown and dry, but they looked like the grand sweeps about Gonzelletta, and Mary felt happier at the sight, while Tom, snuffing the bracing air that came up from the gulf, rattled off cotton-field melodies, which, without rhyme or reason, were still very pleasant to hear at that time.

At Lake Charles they entered the region settled by the lower class of Louisiana French, known in that section as "Cajians," and in Texas as "French greasers," in contradistinction to the Mexican greaser. This section of the United States and its people are but little known, though the latter are the most peculiar on the continent. They are as ignorant as the Indians that once inhabited this section, while they do not possess the fierce energy and courage of the savage. Not one in a hundred knows anything of the English language, and their French patois is incomprehensible to any but those reared in that section. They profess the Catholic religion, and some of the settlements are blest with a priest, but books and schools are unknown among them. As a rule they are very poor, depending altogether on their cattle for support, and rarely cultivating the fine lands on which they are located. During the war they were the most impartial conservatives, for as they did not understand the cause, and would not be interested if they did, they went on branding their cattle, uncaring which side won. The Confederates made an effort to enforce the conscription in this section, but the men so procured, had to be held in the trenches and

ranks by the bayonets of Dick Taylor's Texans, and so worthless were they, that Taylor felt relieved when the last of the Cajians had deserted. Physically they are miserable specimens of humanity. Small, lean, sallow, and cadaverous, they look like the imps of the ague demon. At twenty the women are toothless and shriveled. The homeliness of the females in the calcasien region should make it the home of at least one of the virtues, but unfortunately for the Cajians, virtue never even visits their people in any form. Rude people are usually hospitable, but so jealous are the Cajians of strangers that they do everything to make their stay disagreeable, and they have not hesitated to murder Americans who tried to settle among them.

At Lake Charles they found accommodations superior to those at Mrs. Williams's Hotel, and the following morning Mr. Henry had the wagon spring and the harness repaired, the blacksmith who did the whole job saying the best way to fix the turn-out would be to get a new one. From some passengers who came in on the stage from New Iberia, Mr. Henry learned that the prairies were on fire, and that it would be difficult to follow the road at some points. They advised him to remain at the lake for a few days till the fire had run its course, but he was anxious to push on, and consequently left after the blacksmith had finished his job. A few miles east of Lake Charles a heavy wind began to blow across the prairies, and here and there along the horizon columns of white smoke, ever changing, marked the line of the prairie fires. While Mr. Henry felt no alarm from the fires, he still desired to stop early in the afternoon at the

house of a Cajian close to the road, and resume his journey across the burning country with ample daylight before him. He was met at the door of the house by a withered old hag, to whom he made known his wish in her own dialect. She promptly refused him, and then Mr. Henry told her he would pay any sum which in reason she might ask, but this was unavailing. The old woman told him he was a conscripting officer, and making known her suspicions to her two blear-eyed sons, who came out attracted by the conversation, Mr. Henry was forced to beat a hasty retreat to the wagon. There he tried to open negotiations again for the purchase of some food, and corn for the horse, but the blear-eyed young men menacingly directed him to the next house, six miles further on.

Mr. Henry determined to push on to the next house, but he traveled till dark, and still there was no house in sight. It was evident the blear-eyed young men had lied.

After dark the wind increased, and the smell of the burning prairies was at times suffocating. The tall horse could not be induced to go faster than a walk at any time; but even this dignified gait became gradually slower, and the tall horse showed at times a tendency to stop and contemplate. Shortly after dark they crossed, or attempted to cross, a miry little stream, peculiar to prairie countries. The front wheels got through very well, and the hind ones were very promising. The pull was hard up the opposite bank, and involuntarily all leaned forward, as if to help the tall horse with his load. Suddenly something broke, and the hind wheels slipped back, while

the tall horse joyously walked off with the fore ones, and Mr. Henry and the two girls were thrown forward to the soft ground. Tom clung to the box, till Mr. Henry called him to catch the tall horse, who had accelerated his movements and was going on with the shafts and fore wheels. Fortunately no one was hurt; and while Mr. Henry felt annoyed at the accident, he affected to treat it as a joke, and laughingly told the girls they must sleep on the prairie. Tom returned with the tall horse, and after unharnessing him Mr. Henry started a fire, and spreading some blankets on the ground, told the girls to wait till he unloaded the wagon and got out the eatables he had stored away for just such an occasion. But neither of the young ladies would hear of his working alone. They helped him to unpack the wagon, and, after taking off the box, they gave a hearty pull at the rope, which extricated the fated hind wheels. With the wheels, box, and a blanket, Mr. Henry rigged up a very respectable "wigwam," as he called it, which Tom filled with dry grass from the banks of the stream. After staking the horse, they partook of the cold chicken, biscuit, and mustang wine which Mr. Henry's foresight had provided, and all agreed that they were much more comfortable than if they had staid at the house of the blear-eyed young men.

Every one but Tom thought of the difficulty that lay before them on the morrow, but the subject, as if by mutual consent, was avoided. As they sat in their extemporized tent before the fire, Mr. Henry gently broached to Mary the question of secession; and laying his hand in a fatherly manner on hers, he told her her own story and how he became acquainted

with it. He assured her that in this, as in everything else, she had all his sympathies, for he was heart and soul a Union man. The girls embraced at this discovery of a new tie between them, and Mary did what her heart prompted, he told the story of outrage and wrong which her family had endured, till Louisa wept and threw her arms around her friend, and Mr. Henry rose excitedly and indulged in a string of interjections, some of which were not, to say the least, Biblical. Sitting down, he said :

“ My dear child, you have made my heart very sore. Truly, you have suffered much, and I pray that your reward may be correspondingly great. I have a large plantation and two hundred hands on the Teche, but if the whole is necessary to save the Union, I say take them. I should not be surprised if the war would end in the emancipation of all the slaves South. In that event I will go out to Texas and establish a ranche, and who knows, my little soldier-girl, but we may be neighbors some day.”

“ Oh, I pray we may, Mr. Henry,” said Mary, earnestly, while Louisa echoed the wish. About 10 o'clock all were sleeping as calmly as if in their own homes, uncaring for the hoarse wind that was hurrying the terrible fire toward them. Mr. Henry seemed to sleep by snatches, for he woke every few hours and looked around to see what progress the fire was making. About an hour before day he was startled by a roaring noise like the sound of a hundred cataracts. He hurriedly told the girls to dress—a by no means difficult job—and as they came out from their shelter, they saw for twenty miles great waves of fire rolling toward them. The sky looked like a mighty

furnace, and the red clouds rolled one upon another, as if to quench their burning sides. At fresh points the fires would suddenly start up and then speed away on their devouring course. Branches of burning grass filled the air like a grand pyrotechnic display, and as they fell in advance of the main fire they would light up the dry grass, and plutonian chariots sped on their fiery race before the whip of the wind. The party suffered for a while from the stifling smoke, which soon passed over, and then came a dry, suffocating heat, more oppressive than the smoke. The fire would soon be upon them, and Mr. Henry felt more alarmed than he dared to express. Below his camping place, about a hundred feet, the miry stream widened into a broad marsh, where the grass was too green to burn, and to the center of this they rapidly carried all their effects, including the tall horse. They were not too soon; the fire surged around them and the dry air grew hotter. Mr. Henry wet handkerchiefs, and making all lie on their faces they breathed through the wet cloths, which moistened and cooled the air. A few minutes, and every particle of the dry grass around them was consumed, and the fires had swept on. All rose to congratulate one another on their fortunate escape from the most fearful of deaths. The fire had leaped the stream, and as they turned to look at it, it had reached a cluster of pine trees about four hundred yards beyond. But the fire stopped not. It licked up the dry leaves and grass around the trees, and then gathering at points, as if for a leap, the flames shot up the resinous trunks and spread from limb to limb and tree to tree. Like mighty torches the trees burned, while clouds of black smoke rolled up to the

lurid sky. The winds rushed through the burning grove, throwing out great streamers of flame that straightened and flapped from the tops of the stately pines like the banners of the Fire King.

They watched this sublime spectacle till gradually the torches paled, the prairie fires became lines of distant smoke, and the lurid clouds blackened, then faded before the majesty of the rising sun.

About a half mile from where they broke down Mr. Henry saw a ranche, to which he went, and was fortunate enough to procure some corn bread and dried beef, in addition to a side of raw-hide to fix his wagon. After they had eaten of the by no means inviting fare, Mr. Henry cut the rawhide into long slips, which he moistened and twisted into ropes as strong as iron. With these he succeeded in tying the seceded parts of the wagon firmly together, remarking to the girls, who were watching admiringly: "The country will be united like this after both sides are well cowhided."

The reader would not have been kept an instant on these calcasien prairies if the writer imagined this rapid sketch of the "Cajians" to be a matter of general knowledge. We will, therefore, pass over the long trip of one week to the rich shores of the Teche, and leave unrecorded the troubles of Mr. Henry with the tall horse, the broken harness, and patched-up wagon.

The Teche region is as level as the prairies and heavily timbered. The soil is exceedingly fertile, and the banks of the bayou are lined with the finest sugar plantations in the South. But a few hours' ride from the gulf, the temperature for that latitude is delightful, particularly so in the evenings, which

are always cool. The dwellings of the planters, many of whom are French or of French descent, are models of taste and comfort, erected by wealth in the hands of cultivated men. And the negro quarters would compare in appearance and comfort with the dwellings of the majority of northern working-men.

Mr. Henry's plantation, with its surroundings, was one of the finest on the river, and his house was the ideal southern mansion, with its wide galleries, and white pillars, and cool approaches of overhanging live-oak. The welcome which Mary received at "Sterling," as Mr. Henry called his place, could not have been excelled in cordial warmth at Gonzelletta. There was everything to induce her to remain at Sterling for a week at least, but Mary was determined to push on. She never for an instant lost sight of the one great object that induced her to leave home. In two days there was to be a steamer from Grand Lake for Vicksburg; and as it would save the trouble of going to Baton Rouge or New Orleans, Mr. Henry thought it better to reach the Mississippi by the Bayou Atchafalaya, for there would be no change by that route.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ON THE ATCHAFALAYA.

Mary parted from her friends, who accompanied her to Grand Lake, with a feeling of sorrow, only equaled by the parting at Gonzelletta. She promised them to write from Vicksburg, and pledged herself to renew the acquaintance on her return.

What a wonderful tangle of artificial canals the bayous of southern Louisiana make! Deep and currentless, with low banks, which often overflow and convert the whole region into a lake, they connect with the Mississippi and Red rivers in the most unexpected places, and large steamers could, and do, go to the Gulf of Mexico by sailing up the Red River, a tributary of the Mississippi, which empties into the gulf. One of these outlets is the Bayou Atchafalaya, which connects Red River with Grand Lake, while another bayou connects Grand Lake with the salt waters of Berwick's Bay. This lake, with its flowery shores and moss-covered cypress trees, bears a striking resemblance to Caddo Lake in the northern part of the State.

The steamer on which Mary obtained passage was commodious, and the captain, a friend of Mr. Henry, she found very kind and obliging. He promised Mr. Henry that he would see Mary safely off for Memphis when they reached Vicksburg, so she felt as if her immediate troubles were past. And daily she sat on

deck watching the steamer passing up the sluggish bayou, above which, at times, the stately cypress trees, with their mossy plumes, bent in graceful arches of green, the boughs frequently brushing the deck of the steamer. It seemed wonderful to her how the pilot knew his course, for the whole region was a labyrinth of bayous, and one was so much like the other that she could not imagine by what clue they were sailing. Occasionally the steamer passed a house built on piles, the tops of which showed the high-water mark. These houses, with their bilious-looking inmates, interested her very much, for they reminded her amazingly of the huge sand-hill cranes so common in Texas, and which make stupid efforts to balance their large bodies on one long, thin leg, in a tipsy sort of way, when they desire to be particularly comfortable. In answer to her question as to how these people lived, the captain told her "they made cypress pews and sold them down the river."

The answer mystified her more than ever, but she did not trouble the captain by asking what the virtue of "cypress pews" was. Two days, and they reached Simsport, near the Red River, where the steamer remained for the night, and early next morning the mighty Father of Waters was rolling under the paddles. Northward, past Natchez with its clayey bluffs, and Grand Gulf with its fortified hills, the steamer sped. Six days from the day Mary left "Sterling," she was in the Washington Hall hotel at Vicksburg, from which place she was to start next morning for Memphis. The captain had been true to his promise and obtained her a nice state-room on a steamer sailing the day after their arrival. So far Mary felt

as if Providence had raised up friends to aid her, and as she neared Memphis she felt each revolution of the paddles took her nearer to the field of her labors and her soldier-brother. The steamboat from Vicksburg to Memphis was crowded, and the captain, though very gentlemanly, had too much to do on the landing of the steamer to pay any particular attention to any of his passengers.

Mary assumed a confidence she did not feel as she ordered a carriage through Tom, and drove to a hotel, which one of the officers of the boat recommended. Ever since she left Texas there was some friendly link that connected her with home; now she felt utterly alone. Though her heart fluttered, she was not discouraged—she was too close to her journey's end for that. The hotel was filled with southern officers resplendent in grey uniforms, decked with gold lace. The absorbing topic of conversation seemed to be war, and the streets were lined with soldiers. Indeed, Mary saw so many passing on the street in one hour that she began to question the power of the North to conquer so large a number of strong, confident-looking men. At supper she sat opposite to a splendid-looking soldier who wore on his collar the three stars, indicative of a colonel's rank in the Confederate army. Without being obtrusive, he paid those little well-bred attentions to his fair *vis-a-vis* which might answer for the opening of a conversation where there is no introduction. After supper, as she sat alone for a few minutes in the parlor, the handsome colonel entered, and, glancing over a paper which he carried in his hand, he said, in a tone which might pass for a soliloquy or as a remark to Mary:

"I see our troops have been pretty roughly handled in Missouri."

To which Mary replied: "Indeed, sir! Has there been a battle?"

"Yes, miss; Fremont has been after our boys, and it seems from the full report we were worsted. But, of course, you heard about the fighting before?"

"No, sir, I have not, and I must plead in extenuation of my ignorance of war matters the fact that I have been traveling for eighteen days."

"You astonish me," said the colonel looking surprised, and dropping his paper as he continued: "I trust you will pardon me, miss, but you surely have not been traveling in these times eighteen days unaccompanied?"

"I have my servant, sir, and have been most fortunate during my journey from Texas in meeting kind friends, so that I have never felt wholly alone."

"Might I ask if you are going further than Memphis? I make the inquiry because I saw you arrive in a carriage this evening with only your servant, and I should be most happy, if you are unacquainted here, to aid you in any way."

Mary thanked the colonel, and told him she was going to Kentucky, mentioning her uncle's name.

"What, Warren, of Jessamine?" asked the colonel.

"The same."

"Why, they are old friends of mine. Russell and Allen I know well. Magnificent fellows they are, with one of the loveliest of sisters. By the way, you must be related to my old class-mate, Robert Warren?"

"I am his sister, sir."

"What, Robert Warren's sister! Excuse me, but I

must take your hand ; my name is Harrington. Robert used to call me 'Black-eyed Susan.' Perhaps you may have heard him mention me?"

Mary assured him that she had often heard Robert speak in the kindest manner of his friend of that name, and she expressed her delight at meeting him.

As other persons had entered the parlor by this time, Colonel Harrington led Mary to a retired corner, and after they were seated he said :

"I have heard all about Robert's troubles, and some terrible stories which I could not believe. I know, however, that he is a Union man, but this fact does not lessen my respect for him, though you see I have espoused the cause of the South heart and soul. Now, I do not ask your sentiments ; I know what they must be under the circumstances."

Mary assured him that she was in favor of the Union, and briefly related the difficulty that induced Robert to leave the State, with the subsequent troubles and death of her father, concluding with her own resolve to undertake the journey on which she then was.

The colonel was deeply affected, and assured Mary that the treatment that her family was subjected to would meet the disapproval of every good southern man and soldier. He begged her not to judge the cause of the Confederacy by these acts, but to think of the terrible sacrifice the southern people were willing to make for a principle. He deplored the fact that his sword was drawn against some of his dearest friends, but he valued his love for the South more dearly than his life, and consequently it was greater than any friendship. He felt that he would not survive the war ; though he was not superstitious, still,

with his convictions of duty, he was willing to lay down his life.

The colonel spoke in a calm tone, without any bravado, and Mary could not help admiring the noble soldier, though she inwardly hoped there were but few such men in the southern army. Alas there were tens of thousands of men as brave, intelligent, and patriotic as the gallant Colonel Harrington, who, with a devotion worthy the noblest cause for which a sword was ever drawn, boldly laid down their lives for what they deemed right.

The colonel told Mary he was glad he had met her at that time, as his regiment left on the following afternoon for Fort Donelson. He would secure a pass from the provost marshal in the morning, and with her permission see her safely off in the cars. Mary looked the gratitude she could not express as she rose to bid the colonel good night.

About ten the next morning Mary started for Bowling Green *via* Nashville, Colonel Harrington kindly escorting her to the depot, and provided her with a pass, without which, he informed her, it would be impossible to travel through the country occupied by the southern army. So impressed was she with the value of the pass that she put it away carefully in her pocket-book, while she slipped the railroad ticket inside her glove.

Everything passed off quietly till she approached Nashville, when an officer, accompanied by an armed guard, entered the car and examined the passes of all the passengers. Mary saw him coming and put her hand in her pocket for the pocket-book containing hers, when, to her horror, she found it gone. She

searched nervously about her dress and in her satchel, but the pass and her pocket-book were gone. By this time the officer was waiting by her side, watching her excited movements. The search was vain, and she stated the circumstances to the lieutenant. He seemed inclined to believe her statements, but at the same time he informed her that she must leave the cars at Nashville and accompany him, with her servant, to the office of the provost marshal. A number of gentlemen in the car, seeing Mary's agitation, and learning about the lost pass, tried to induce the lieutenant to let her go on, but he had his orders and was inflexible. Mary, at his request, gave him the check for her trunk, which was to have gone on to Bowling Green. Fear and mortification, for the time, unnerved her, and when she left the car at Nashville, it required all her power to keep herself from swooning. The officer was at least a kind man, and at the depot he ordered a carriage, and placing Mary and her servant inside, he directed the driver to take the trunk along and drive to the City Hotel, where he must see the lady provided with suitable rooms. He told Mary at the same time that he would relate her case to the provost marshal at once, and he doubted not but she could go on by the next train. Unfortunately, it was now late in the evening, and the provost marshal had left his office and would not be back till the next day. His deputy never made a decision without consulting his principal, so, after the lieutenant had made his report, he was informed that the case could not be examined till next day. This was sad news to Mary, but she was so conscious of her innocence of any wrong, that, as she pondered the whole affair over that

night, she felt convinced she would be permitted to resume her journey in the morning.

That night the lieutenant, in the kindest spirit, told a group of officers and soldiers of his interesting captive, and stated how "it went against the grain to compel the lady to leave the train." In answer to a dozen queries as to the lady's name, and where she was from, he answered:

"Miss Mary Warren; she is on her way from Texas to Kentucky."

"What's her name?" asked an excited nasal voice, as a tall, cadaverous-looking man pushed toward the lieutenant. The name was repeated for this man's information, who immediately said with an oath:

"Hang on ter that gal, lieutenant; I know her like a book. She's a straight-out Yankee, and lived nigh whar I com'd from."

"The devil she is!" said the lieutenant, apparently annoyed, "and who are you, and where do you come from?"

"Wall, I ain't ashamed to answer them ar' questions all night," said the cadaverous man, edging close to the lieutenant. "I belong to the Eighth Texas; my name is Henderson Townsend, an' I come from Brazoria County, an' ain't ashamed to own it."

This was said in a tone of bravado that found an echo in the breasts of many of the bystanders, judging from such excited expressions as "Bully for Texas!" "Good for the Rangers!" "Don't be backed down, ole fel!" "Spit out the hull yarn!"

To "spit out the whole yarn" was exactly what Townsend desired. After telling the crowd, which was constantly increasing, that he had left TEXAS but

a short time before, he related, in his own way, the facts already familiar to the reader, making himself a conspicuous martyr, and closing by saying: "If that gal ain't got letters on her that 'll prove what I say, an' show she is travelin' fur no good, why, you may call me a liar."

"Now, that's far an' squar." "No one kin say nothin' agin that," said a number of men in the crowd, while the lieutenant, who was blaming himself for not letting Mary go on, though she could not have gone far without being subjected to another scrutiny, growled out:

"Yes, and after the letters are read, if there are any, I will still believe there is one damned liar mixed up in this affair."

Early next morning, the lieutenant called on Mary, who grew deathly pale as she heard him recite Townsend's story. As he concluded, he looked into her calm, beautiful eyes for an instant, and added: "I need not tell you, Miss Warren, that I do not believe this man's statements. However, the examination will be a very short affair. I will walk with you to and from the office."

Mary thanked the lieutenant for his kind words, and left the parlor to make preparations to accompany him. She was so weak she could hardly walk up the stairs, and as she glanced in the mirror, she was still more frightened at the ashy paleness of her own lips and face. She staggered to a chair and pressed her hand to her forehead as if to ease an intense pain. She had no time for tears, and no exciting sympathy to make them flow. Whispering, as she clasped her hands and raised her eyes to Heaven, "Oh, thou great

God, help me!" she adjusted her dress and descended the stairs, first telling the frightened Tom to remain in the room with her trunk till she came back.

The provost marshal's office was on the first floor of a high brick building that stood sternly by itself. It had no shutters or blinds to its windows, and it resembled a cold, hard face, without eyebrows. From a staff in the second story, the barred flag drooped over the office door, and it looked particularly awful and red that chill November morning. An armed guard paced before the door and hugged his gun as if it contained some latent heat he wished to squeeze out and appropriate to himself. The office was large and dreary; a number of maps hung on the walls, with a few coarse lithographs intended to give a comical idea of the Yankee retreat from Bull Run. Four clerks sat on high stools before one long desk, and at the further end of the room an officer, with a grey, stiff head rising above his high-collared coat, peered through his spectacles at a parcel of papers which he had just taken from the table before him, as Mary, with the officer, entered.

"Hah! morning, Lieutenant Cummings," said the officer, glancing up at the lieutenant with his cold, blue eyes, and at the same time adjusting his spectacles to scrutinize Mary.

"Good morning, Major Kimber. Have you time to attend to the case I have brought this morning?"

The lieutenant spoke in a deferential way, and the major put his hand to his mouth and gave two stern, little coughs, as if considering whether he should be offended at the interruption or not. The major had been a Middle Tennessee pettifogger, but since the

war he was convinced that Providence had set the seal of the warrior upon him. His superior officers thought differently, and detailed him for his present duty. He considered it strictly military to be gruff in his questions and abrupt in his replies; to carry his back in and his breast out, which, not having done all his life, made the position very hard to assume at fifty-eight. Though the most garrulous bar-room tippler before the war, and the most approachable of all selfish mortals, he deemed it duty now to make every subordinate as miserable as possible, and frowned fiercely on every attempt at familiarity. He drowned out all complaints against his decisions by the word *duty*, and he needed only a higher field of influence to be a first-class tyrant.

"Bring your prisoner here!" commanded the major, placing his hands on the sides of his arm-chair and drawing in his legs, as if preparing to spring up and devour the pale, timid creature on whom he was glaring. The "prisoner" having been placed in the immediate presence of the august marshal, he seized a pen and growled, as he jabbed it into an ink-bottle and drew a sheet of paper before him, as if about to sign the death-warrant of his bitterest foe, "State case."

Lieutenant Cummings briefly stated the facts connected with Mary's detention, and humbly volunteered the opinion that her story was true.

"I judge that. Heard of this case. Simmes!" addressing one of the young men on a high stool, "Call fellow—Townsend—Eighth Texas."

Simmes called Townsend, who was posted in a back room, awaiting the examination. He came in, hat in hand, looking as innocent and moral as such a

scoundrel possibly could. “Townsend,” said the major, glancing fiercely up, “Know young woman, Warren?”

“I does, very well, sir, I reckon,” said Townsend, glancing down at his boots.

“State case,” said the major, again jabbing his pen into the ink-bottle and assuming a death-warrant aspect.

Townsend related his knowledge of the Warrens in his own way, spoke about the crimes of Robert, and the imprisonment of his father, and concluded by saying:

“Yeh can swar me, ef yeh choose, but though of course yeh knows more about them things than I does. I’d say, if yeh do n’t fine papers in that young lady’s trunk what’ll prove what I say, why, I think I’d be willin’ ter be shot.”

“Good suggestion, very fair. Cummings, have this young woman’s trunk brought at once.”

The lieutenant brought Mary a chair, whispered to her “Don’t be frightened,” and then left for the trunk. In a short time he returned, accompanied by Tom, who, faithful to his trust, staid with the trunk, and now came in crying.

“Whose servant?” asked Major Kimber.

He was informed that the boy belonged to Miss Warren.

“Boy! what do you know about this young woman?” sternly asked the major, glancing at Tom, who stood terribly frightened beside Mary’s chair.

“Maussee,” replied Tom, “I does ’nt know nothin’ ’bout Miss Mary.”

“Ought to have known niggers know nothing as witnesses. Cummings, have that trunk opened.”

The lieutenant asked Mary for the key, and opening the trunk, beckoned her to his side and said: "Miss Warren, please let me have all your letters, papers, and journal, if you keep one. I dislike this business of searching your things."

Mary walked over, took out a parcel of letters, and her journal, and, handing them to the lieutenant, said: "I believe these are the only papers in my possession."

The letters were principally to Robert from his mother and Amy, and a few to friends in Kentucky. Mrs. Warren's letters detailed all the troubles since Robert left, and they breathed a spirit of such devoted patriotism and maternal love, that Major Kimber said in the middle of one which he was reading aloud:

"Enough of that; so far, good." He opened Amy's letter, and muttered it over, reading aloud that part which spoke of Townsend's visit to acquaint them with Robert's death. Indeed, as Amy penned the sad words, she was not certain but the newspaper report was correct. As Townsend heard this letter, he grew livid with rage, and said: "That part 's a lie."

"Hold your tongue, sir. All truth or no truth!" said the major, who evidently enjoyed the description of Townsend's interview with Miss Boardman. After this the journal was read. It gave a daily sketch of the difficulties and dangers of Mary's trip so far from Texas, and it showed in the entry made at Memphis that Colonel Harrington promised to procure her a pass next day, and in the note made at Nashville the reception of the pass and subsequent troubles were related. The major deemed the case very serious.

He felt that Miss Warren, or "the young woman," as he called her, was a dangerous person, carrying letters for the enemy and bearing with her a journal of very reliable information. "She must be held," said the major.

"How?" asked the lieutenant.

"In prison," said the major,

Poor Mary, she tried to explain. She protested her innocence of any intention to do wrong, but she was speaking to a heartless man.

That night the gloomy walls of the Nashville jail hemmed her in, and Tom was taken in charge by the provost marshal.

CHAPTER XXVII

WARREN, GAINES, AND THE TWO DAWNS.

Robert Warren's trip to and from Fort Donelson was the most successful scout of the war up to that time, still he did not like the service and made application to return to his regiment, but without success. General Buell decided he was the right man in the right place, and induced him to act as a scout with General Grant, who, after the battle at Fort Donelson, pushed south toward the Tennessee, in the direction of Pittsburg Landing. Robert had an order for such details as he might require, to be filled under his own direction. He had been separated from Gaines for some time, and took the advantage of his power to have his old friend again by his side. Little Ned Dawn, who had completely recovered from his wound received near Crab Orchard, was warmly attached to Robert. He was a brave, cool-headed boy, with a great deal of natural intelligence, and an undoubting, childlike faith in the success of the Union cause that was very refreshing to those who fully appreciated the difficulties under which the Union troops fought. His grandfather, though beyond the age at which troops were enlisted in the first years of the war, was a strong, hearty old man, and the best marksman in Allen Warren's company, which he had been permitted to join. During the long marches

and severe vidette duty, from Donelson to the Tennessee, he was ever at his post, doing his whole duty, and the most uncomplaining of men, when others showed a disposition to growl. Captain Warren had a great deal of respect for the old patriot, and, after he had learned his wonderful powers of endurance and his coolness and good sense in danger, he considered him the best man in his squadron. However, he was willing to let him go with Little Ned and Gaines. These three, with a young Scotchman named Aleck Cameron, who had worked as an itinerant watchmender in every part of the State before the war, constituted Robert Warren's command. Robert had been busy during the whole campaign, as the Union forces pushed through the very heart of the secession part of Tennessee. The greater part of the time he was absent from his company, and now, as every day brought Grant and Sidney Johnston closer together, he longed to be with the squadron and participate in its actions. Stories of immense forces in and around the town of Corinth reached the Union Army, while the rumor was daily spreading through the Union camp that Forrest and Breckinridge were closing in from the direction of Bolivar and Memphis. Scarce a day passed without the capture of small bands of recruits, who were making their way south to join Breckinridge, while the roads were crowded with fugitives flying with ill-grounded fears before the Union advance.

At this time Robert was not delighted to receive an order to scout in the direction of Bolivar, and, if possible, to enter the town and ascertain the numbers and intention of the enemy. The undertaking, to

him, was particularly difficult, as the Texas Rangers at that time were in and around Bolivar, and to be recognized by any of them would be certain ruin. To enter the lines of the enemy is an easy matter at any time. The difficulty of getting out should be an important consideration in every plan, and in the contemplated scout Robert gave it a fitting prominence. He determined to leave the Union lines in the early night and ride from Waynesboro' northwest into Henderson County, a distance of forty miles, and then turn south toward Bolivar. The whole distance to be traveled was two hundred and fifty miles, and this he hoped to accomplish in one week. Dressed as citizens, well armed and finely mounted, Robert Warren and his four men passed the outer pickets at eight o'clock on the night of March 23. It was very dark, and a driving sleet from the north beat in their faces, and made the gloom and blackness more oppressive. The roads were in a very bad condition, and the frequent application of the spur was necessary to urge the animals against the biting storm. Frequently during the night Robert dismounted before some house near the roadside and inquired the road, and the intimation that he was a soldier going to join the forces near Bolivar always secured him the desired information. By daylight the scouts reached Clayville, in Henderson County, stiff and cold from their ride of forty-three miles, and standing much in need of the hospitality extended to them by Mr. Sweeny, proprietor of the Jackson House at that place. There were no soldiers in the town, and the news of the arrival of strangers from the outside world soon brought all the old men and boys in town

to the hotel to learn the news. They had had no mail for a long time, and the people were despondent, for they feared that another reverse like that at Fort Donelson would end the Confederacy.

Robert did the talking for his party, and he caused little Ned to look up with wondering eyes as he said to an old planter named Chew, to whom he had been introduced:

"No, sir; a dozen defeats like Donelson will not ruin our cause. You do your duty at home, and we will do ours in the field. We are willing to give our lives for our country, You must be willing to give up your homes, if need be, to save it."

"Very true," said the old planter, while a fiery-looking man, who walked with a crutch and dressed very shabbily, said:

"Them's my ideas to a dot. If yeh can't fight, why give up everything yeh have; that's what I've got to say."

The lame man emphasized his views by taking a fresh chew of tobacco, and looking at the old planter with a stare that seemed to say: "Now, shell out, old skinflint!"

"I am willing to give where my property can be used to advantage," said Mr. Chew, looking coldly at the lame man, "but I do n't see the necessity for throwing it away in order that I may be as poor as my neighbors."

"Mr. Chew," said the lame man savagely, "I sent my only boy to fight. You sent no one coz ye've only got a daughter. Now you're rich, I'm poor; you've got seventy niggars to work for yeh, I ain't got none. You voted fur secession, so did I, but I've

got to starve or work with this d—d crutch under my arm, while you are comfortable, and sleep without fearin' your boy will be killed next fight. I ain't sorry fur what I did, but it looks very much as if I, a poor man, was givin' up all to make you richer an' save your niggars."

"Do n't rile so, Tom Oliver," said the landlord, who formed one of the circle that stood about Robert, "If yeh ever want food or anything I have, why come after it an I'll give it yeh."

"Yees, an' yeh'd give it in the same way to Aunt Clop, the blind niggar. No, what I wants is to get support as a right, not like a beggar. I want this war game to be dealt out far. Should I beg, and should Mrs. Baker have to take in washin' jes' coz I gave up my boy, and coz she sent her boy to the war? It ain't far, I be cussed if it is."

"Gentlemen," said Robert after the lame man had concluded, "I am sorry this visit of mine should have led to any expression of ill-feeling. This is a time for exercising the most generous charity, and making the greatest sacrifices. Our friend," pointing to the lame man, "deserves our respect and support, so does the woman of whom he has spoken. Now permit me with this one-hundred-dollar bill, in good Confederate money, to head a subscription for those good people, and let every man in your village give what he can for the same purpose, and when the sum is exhausted start a new list, and I will leave another hundred dollars with the landlord to head it."

These remarks of Robert gave great satisfaction, particularly to the lame man, and his generous conduct was imitated on the spot by a dozen men. Invi-

tations to drink came in from all sides, and Mr. Chew pressinglly invited him to his house, but Robert, who wanted sleep and wished to be in the saddle again by the afternoon, thankfully declined, and was permitted to retire at once.

By four in the afternoon the scouts were up, and their horses saddled. The fame of Robert's act had spread throughout the village, and men, women, and children gathered to wish him God-speed on his journey, and pray for his safe return from the war.

The day after their departure from Clayville, the scouts began to encounter small bodies of mounted men and foraging parties from Bolivar. They learned that there were some Texans there, but that the greater part of the rangers were at Corinth. It was impossible to ascertain the strength of the Confederate forces at Bolivar, as he was informed there was great activity among them, and the troops were continually on the move.

Robert hit upon his plan and determined to enter Bolivar with his companions, and report at once to General Breckinridge. About 8 o'clock at night, and three days after he had left the Union lines, he was at a small tavern in Bolivar, preparing to call on General Breckinridge.

The orderly before the general's headquarters scrutinized closely the large, heavy-set man with short, red hair and long, red beard, who wished to see General Breckinridge. The general was busy with Colonel Hanson, and would not like to be disturbed, except on official business, so the orderly said.

"Now, fren', you jes' tell the ginral I come from Kaintuck, an' hev some news fur him, Yankee papers

an' sich, an' I reckon he'll let Sol Burns in. Tell him I voted fur him an' I'll fight fur him." So saying, Sol Burns walked forward as if he would go in without any further announcement, but the orderly stepped before him, and telling him to wait, he entered the general's room. He returned shortly, and Sol Burns was conducted in. There he sat like a soldier prince, looking more handsome and lordly than when Robert saw him in Lexington. Piles of papers were crowded before him on the table, and he was evidently busy with some writing. Colonel Hanson was reading, with a bottle and pitcher beside him, and two tumblers, one of which was moved toward the general.

The general looked up as he heard the scraping sound of Sol Burns's heavy boots.

"What do you want with me, my man?" asked the general, as Sol advanced with his brown hand extended.

"I wants to shake yer han', ginral, an' to give yeh some news from Kaintuck. Ginral, I 'm Sol Burns, from Owen. Yeh know me——"

"Yes, yes, Mr. Burns; glad to see you," said the general, as he shook hands with Sol, then took up his pen and crossed a "t."

"Ginral, won't it be all right to speak right out afore this gentleman?" pointing to Hanson.

"Oh, yes, perfectly safe. Please be quick, Mr. Burns."

"Wall, I will, ginral. Thar's a lot of Yankee papers. Whin I comed through I jis' friz on to 'em; fur, thinks I, the ginral will like to see how the Yanks gin him hell."

"Very kind in you, indeed," said the general, seizing the bundle eagerly, and handing some of the papers to Colonel Hanson, "but where did you come from, and what do you purpose doing?"

“Wall, ginral, me an’ my boy an’ two neighbors lef’ home arter the d—d Yankees tuk Donelson. We couldn’t stan’ it no longer. We wanted to git to Morgan, but the Yanks kep’ a gittin’ in our road, an’ we had to come slap through ’em a few days ago. I swar it made my har rise!”

The general dropped the paper and looked sharply at Sol, who drew closer to the table and was toying with the neck of the black bottle. The general’s face immediately relaxed, and, with a smile, he asked Sol if he ever drank.

“Wall, not much, ginral, but I’d break an oath to drink with you.”

The general told him to help himself, which Sol did in the most generous way. After this he told the general all he knew about the Yankee forces, and the knowledge he had picked up amazed the general, for it corroborated in many points information he had recently obtained.

Colonel Hanson proposed to Sol that he and his friends should join his regiment, but Sol was determined to join Morgan, and begged the general to put him on the track. After some further conversation the general called an officer from an adjoining room and directed him to take care of Burns and his friend.

“But, ginral,” said Sol, as he was going to the door, “when am I to git off to Morgan?”

“I will see you about it in the morning,” said the general. “Come here about nine, and we will talk it all over.”

Sol promised to do so, and, shaking hands with the general and Colonel Hanson, he walked out with Lieutenant Mason. The drizzling rain still continued,

and the lieutenant did not like the idea of having to go to the provost marshal's, and perhaps to the recruit camp. Sol appreciated the lieutenant's position, and informed him that he could stay for the night very comfortably at the tavern where his friends were. Being assured of this the lieutenant returned, refusing Sol's invitation to "come somewhars an' take suthin'."

There was but little sleep for Robert that night. He divided the time with reliefs, and kept one of the men always on the watch at the stable to prevent the horses being stolen. He carefully thought over every point he had gained since leaving the Union lines, and wondered as to the course he should pursue if General Breckinridge refused to let him hunt up Morgan's command, which was at that time in North-eastern Middle Tennessee.

At half-past eight o'clock Sol Burns, with his hat slouched and smoking a corn-cob pipe, passed down the street toward General Breckinridge's headquarters. He looked like a great, rough backwoodsman, and more than one man whom he passed looked back and thought "that red-whiskered chap would be an ugly man to handle."

Sol Burns waited at the door for the general's arrival, and as he leaned against the hitching-post a hand was laid on his shoulder and a familiar voice said:

"Frien', give me some of yer fire."

Sol Burns did not look up, but for an instant his heart stopped beating and a tremor ran through his powerful frame. It was the voice of Henderson Townsend, made still more certain by the repetition:

"Say, frien', will yeh let me have a light?"

Knocking the ashes from the corn-cob pipe, Sol Burns said, "Sartin, stranger, sartin;" and with his eyes still cast down he handed the pipe in the direction of the voice.

He heard the puffing incident to a pipe which does not draw well, and looking up his fears were confirmed. There was the freckled, cadaverous face of Townsend, thinner and more repulsive than ever.

"Ain't yeh a feelin' well, frien'?" asked Townsend as he handed back the pipe.

"I'm feelin' right smart," said Sol Burns, still looking down.

"It ain't healthy weather somehow now," said Townsend.

"No, not for some constitutions," said Sol. "I suppose, mister, you feel purty sick about these times?"

"Wall, yes; I ain't just well. I've been a ridin' hard, an' my reegment is allus a fightin', an' I got on the sick list."

"What is yer reegment, and whar is it now?" asked Sol, playing with the handle of a huge revolver, which protruded from the holster at his side.

"I b'long ter the Eighth Texas. Some is here, and I specs they'll mosly be in this evenin'."

"Yer kernel's Wharton, I reckon?" said Sol in an inquiring tone.

"No; Wharton's major or lieutenant-kernel, don't know which jes' now. Yeh see I ain't with 'em much. Terry, yeh know, is kernel." Townsend stopped for a second, and continued, "I'm a waitin' ter see Wharton here this mornin'. I heerd he'd be along to see Ginerel Breckinridge."

As Townsend spoke General Breckinridge passed in, and, recognizing Sol Burns, he told him to enter, which Sol very quickly did.

“Burns,” said the general, “I think it will be impossible for you to reach Morgan at present. However, I will let you try. You will return if you meet the Yankees; but first find out all you can about them. You must go by way of Pittsburg Landing and around by Tuscumbia. I will have passes for yourself and men. Lieutenant Mason will attend to it. I think it best, however, in case you should be captured, that you and your friends should first be mustered into the Confederate States service. I will make you a sergeant, and give you charge of the party. Come here about noon.”

“Very well, ginral, I’ll be along and git mustered,” said Sol as he walked out. He passed Townsend outside, and resisted that individual’s efforts to draw him into conversation.

Returning to the hotel, he left Little Ned in charge of the horses, and giving instructions to the rest they walked out and rambled around the town and camp, each one taking a different course, and returning to the tavern at noon. Gaines was disguised, but as he had no control over his voice Robert instructed him to speak guardedly, and to see that there were no Texan men near should he get into conversation with any person.

At the appointed time Sol Burns reported at General Breckinridge’s headquarters, and after some delay he succeeded in getting in, when he was sent to Lieutenant Mason’s desk. The lieutenant had a pass already signed, and in which he wrote the names of

Sol Burns and his friends. He gave him the pass, and a letter to the mustering officer, and telling him to return in the afternoon, as the general wished to see him, he motioned him toward the door. As he passed out he met Townsend, and not expecting to see him, he looked him directly in the face. And an ashy pallor came over Townsend's face as their eyes met, and he staggered against the post with his mouth open. Sol Burns saw the change, and, walking up, said, "Stranger I reckon yer sickness is wus than it was?"

"God, ye've nearly skeered me out o' my boots," said Townsend, gasping. "I reckon my wits is leavin' me. Bentley, who's jes' gone ter camp, and I was walkin' long, and I seed a fellar I know'd ter be dead. An' jes' as you com'd out that ar door I'd a swore yeh wus a chap named Bob Warren. He's dead too, sir—it makes me sick."

"I reckon ye've been drinkin' right smart," said Sol. "Drink's bad fur the eyes. Kin you tell me, stranger, whar I'll find Cap'n Pollock's office, him as swars fellers?"

Townsend gave the desired information, and Sol Burns sauntered leisurely away. Once he dropped his pipe, and stooping to pick it up he looked between his legs and saw Townsend gazing after him with the greatest earnestness. Turning a corner he quickened his gait and hurried to the tavern. He found Gaines very much excited and alarmed. He had passed Bentley and Townsend, and he heard Townsend repeat his name, and make some remark to Bentley. He tried to be cool, but they followed him for some distance, and he returned to the tavern feeling convinced that they watched him. "We must leave here inside of

ten minutes. Be calm, Gaines. Ned, saddle your horse and mine. Be sure the girths are right. Lead the horses to the door and hold them with the bridle-reins over their heads till I come."

"All right, sir," said little Ned, walking to the stable, "I'll have dem out in ten seconds."

Old Dawn and Aleck Cameron returned from their trip quite calm, but the latter was somewhat nervous when he heard Robert's now decided order to saddle and mount.

Robert entered the tavern, before which there was a crowd of soldiers, and asked for his bill. While the landlord was mentally calculating the amount, he took out the pass signed by General Breckinridge, and showing it to a tall young man with long hair and a broad-brimmed hat, he asked him which was the best road to Corinth.

"Thar's only one road, stranger, and that's about as fit to wagon over as cold mush is to make bricks of," said the young man.

"I reckon the roads is bad, but I'm agoin' on horse-back. Got orders to go on at once, an' thar's no use a tryin' to git out of it," said Robert, folding the pass and putting it in his pocket.

The young man gave the proper directions. The road ran past General Forrest's headquarters, and continued nearly southeast.

Robert settled the bill, treated every body in the bar-room, including the landlord, and mounting with his companions, he rode leisurely out of Bolivar. As they passed Forrest's headquarters they saw Colonel Wharton and Bentley busy in conversation. Bentley was gesticulating with a great deal of emphasis,

while Wharton looked at the ground, stroked his yellow moustache, and nervously swayed himself back and forth on his heels. Robert appeared not to notice them, but his presence startled both the men, for they suddenly stopped their conversation, and gazed earnestly after the little cavalcade. Still Robert continued at a walk, and after they had gone about fifty yards beyond where Wharton stood, he whispered to little Ned to look back. Ned did so, and reported the two men they had passed walking hurriedly in the direction of General Breckinridge's headquarters. It was two hundred yards ahead to a turn in the road, and over that distance the scouts rode their horses, never looking back. Passing the turn, Robert hastily directed the men to look to their arms and see if all was right. This done, he asked each man if his horse was in good condition, and received an affirmative reply.

"Well, boys, we have a hard ride before us, and perhaps a hard fight; before twenty minutes we will be pursued. Keep well together, and remember there is a rope awaiting in Bolivar for the man that surrenders."

There was no reply to these remarks of Robert, but he saw the determined faces, and the shortened hold the men took of their bridle-reins.

"Follow me!" As Robert said this he struck the spurs into the sleek sides of Don, and the noble animal flew ahead, and the others followed close at the same rapid gait.

Two miles out they were halted by some pickets, and Robert produced the pass which enabled them to keep on. For three hours, till the sun began to set

over the western line of tall trees, the scouts kept on at the same flying rate. As they were rising a declivity, little Ned's horse became perceptibly lame, and they discovered that he had cast a shoe some time before, judging from the broken condition of his hoof. On gaining the crest of the ridge they had a view of the Bolivar road for four miles, and as Robert turned to look back, he saw a body of galloping horsemen standing out like black *silhouettes* against the red western sky.

"Ned, take the bridle and saddle off your horse, quick! There, chase him into the woods. Throw the traps behind that log." Ned did as Robert directed. "Now jump up behind me, quick. Hold on hard." Ned vaulted up lightly behind Robert, and again the powerful Don bounded ahead, evidently unconscious of the extra weight he carried. It was growing dark rapidly. They were a good thirty miles from Bolivar, and four ahead of their pursuers, if pursuers they were. The road led through a dense wood for about two miles, and it was so bad that the horses could only struggle along at a brisk walk. Beyond the woods the road forked, and Robert unhesitatingly wheeled to the left, knowing from the course that it led in the direction of the Union Army. For two hours the horses staggered through the mire and over patches of corduroy that seemed afloat in the fluid mud, then suddenly the road terminated, and a broad swollen river flowed across the path of the scouts. There was no time to lose. Riding a short distance up the bank all dismounted, and Robert took the saddle off Don, and stripping off all his own clothing he buckled his pistol belt around his waist and mounted.

“Aleck Cameron, let Ned hold your horse. Go back within calling distance on the road, and if you hear horsemen advancing call me at once. Gaines, let Dawn hold your horse, and come to the river bank with your grazing rope, to aid me if necessary. There was a ferry here once, I see, so that the chances of fording are small, but I’ll try it.”

The disposition of the little force was quickly made, and Robert rode to the water’s edge. Don stooped, drank for a few seconds, then showed a disposition to withdraw his fine fore limbs from the mud into which they were sinking, and go back, but the rider shook the bridle, pressed his heels to the hot, sleek sides, and Don cautiously waded in. A few yards of mud and cold water, then horse and rider sank for a second in the black river, and emerging, the panting animal headed for the opposite shore, whose indistinct outline seemed miles away. Gradually the white form and the puffing sounds of the horse seemed lost down the river, where the merciless current was bearing them. The men on shore in breathless anxiety watched the perilous undertaking, and though disappointed in the result, it was with a feeling of satisfaction they saw the white form nearing the shore which he left, two hundred yards further down.

“We can’t cross here, that’s settled. Come, Ned, let your grandfather hold the horses; walk Don up and down as fast as you can while I dress.”

Robert’s teeth chattered with the severe chilling he had just received, but he was not conscious of cold or fatigue. All his thoughts were busy considering their situation and planning for escape. His fears were not personal; the success of the undertaking,

and the return to the Union lines with the valuable information he had obtained, were the great incentives that moved him.

Resaddling Don, Aleck Cameron was recalled, and Robert decided to ride down the river. If pursued, the enemy had already passed the cross-roads going in the direction of Shiloh, or had come in on the one they had taken. The latter was the most natural inference, as they would be guided at a doubtful point by the tracks in the mud. Down the river, over creeks, through patches of timber, and across soft, miry fields they urged their horses till a grey streak in the east told them that day was approaching. Seeing a light ahead, and feeling the necessity for feeding their horses and refreshing themselves, the whole party rode boldly up, and dismounted before a cluster of negro cabins, where the hands were up and busy with their morning meal. In answer to Robert's question of "Who lives here?" at the door of a cabin, an old negro, evidently confused at the sudden appearance of the horsemen, said, "Nobody does 'nt lib heah, mausser. This is jest a plantation."

"Who owns the plantation?" asked Robert.

"Mausser McIntyre, mausser."

"A good Scotch name," said Aleck Cameron, drawing near.

"Where does Mr. McIntyre live?" asked Robert.

"Oh, he's done gone to Bolver. Libs dar, 'cept sometimes comes down to see how we gits on," said the old negro, in a more composed tone.

"What is your overseer's name, and where is his house?" asked Robert, throwing Don's bridle to Little Ned.

“De overseer’s name ’s Sampson, sah, an’ he libs heah in dis house. I’s de overseer, mauss.” The old negro evidently thought this a joke, for he indulged in a chuckling laugh.

“Glad to see you, Sampson,” said Robert by way of introduction. “Are there many colored overseers in this section?”

“Oh yes, mauss; lots since the wah.”

“Well, Sampson, myself and friends have been riding all night trying to find a crossing in this infernal river. What do you call it?”

“White Oak Creek, mauss.”

“It is certainly a gentle creek. Now, Uncle Sampson, I want to pay you well for whatever help you give me. Can you feed our horses and get us something to eat?”

“Lor’, mauss, I kin feed de hosses, but we ain’t got nothin’ wot white folks ud eat no how,” said Sampson, with a closing chuckle.

“What have you to eat?”

“Oh, corn bread an’ bacon, an’ milk. Den dars chickens an’ eggs, but de folks about owns ’em, and sets a big price on ’em.”

“I don’t care about the price. Now call out some one and have the horses put in a dry place and fed and well rubbed. You understand?”

“Yes, sah.”

In a few seconds the jaded horses were divested of their equipments, and, under the superintendence of Gaines, they were being attended to. In the meantime Sampson called some black people and made a requisition for eggs, while the weary scouts carried their saddles into the cabin and warmed themselves as they rested around the blazing fire.

The cooking was done in a shanty close by, from which came the sputtering sound of frying bacon and the metallic ring of the hot oven lid.

Sampson rightly judged the appetites of the hungry men by his expedition and the large quantities of food he prepared. When the meal of corn-dodgers, bacon, eggs, and boiled milk was brought in the old negro, who stood watching the men as they ate, seemed lost in wonder, and uttered at every huge mouthful, "Good Lor'! dat beats ebryting! Neber knowd sich! Ki yi, but dat ar egg jest went quick! Reckon dem gen'lmen wuz neber weaned. Dey jest goes fur de milk, sartin!"

Never did men enjoy a meal more than Warren's scouts the breakfast prepared by the negroes, and Robert, who knew very well that every particle of it, excepting the eggs, came from the weekly allowance of the hands, determined to remunerate them well for their kindness.

After breakfast he learned from Sampson that they were only forty-five miles from Bolivar, though they must have ridden over seventy. They were ten miles from the Shiloh road, and about twenty from the Tennessee river. Sampson also informed him that the plantation was seldom visited, and the nearest white people were a mile off. Robert knew the negro character thoroughly, and he determined to trust this old man, who certainly must be reliable to be entrusted by his master with the care of twenty hands and two hundred acres of cotton.

"Sampson, are you a secessionist or a Union man?" asked Robert, as he lit his pipe and stretched himself beside Gaines on the hearth.

“ Oh, mauss, I ain't nothin', 'cept, praise de Lor', I's a Methodist !” said Sampson, leaning against the wide chimney side, and looking earnestly at his questioner.

“ And a very good road the Methodists have marked out to the better land, Sampson. No corduroys or pontoons, but direct and straight.”

“ Yes, mauss,” interrupted Sampson, in a severely religious tone, “ but de straight an' narrer road's filled wud truble an' kar', like great rocks, an' many ob de poor sinners gwine home to glory stumble an' fall, an' git worried an' come back ; but praise de Lor', mauss, I 'll keep on a few years more, an' I 'll reach de ribber as you did, but de ferry will be dar, an' de new life, an' frien's on de odder bank, an' de Lamb who 'll take de trubbled to His bres', an' make all like a liddle chile.”

The conversation had taken a religious turn which Robert had not expected, but he was glad of it, for it confirmed his previous opinion of the old man.

“ Do you think the war very wicked, Sampson ?”

“ Wall, mauss, I 's only a darkey ; do n't matter what I tinks. De Lor' of Battles kin only fight on one side, an' when He bares de arm for destruction, no man kin stan'.”

“ How would you treat the Yankees if they were to come here, Sampson ?”

“ Jes', mauss, as I 've treated you ; for de Lor' says, ‘ As yeh 've helped de smallest ob dese, so I 'll stan' by you :’ an' sometimes we keers fur angels in de skies, ’ (disguise.)

“ Would it frighten you, Sampson, if I were to tell you that myself and friends are Yankees, and that we

have lost our way, and would you aid us to get to the Union lines?"

Robert sat up as he spoke, and he and his companions watched the countenance of the old darkey. He evinced but little surprise; indeed a look of incredulity gradually spread over his face, and with a forced smile, Sampson said:

"Now, mauss, yeh knows I do n't want to do no harm; I's jes' an' ole darkey, doin' all de Lor' calls me to do, neider lookin' to de right nor de lef'."

Robert rose and taking the black man's hand in his, he looked earnestly into his eyes for a few seconds, and the mild, dark eyes of the negro met his with the confidence of a child.

"Sampson, I belong to the Union Army; I would not deceive you. You know we are the friends of the black man. Can I depend on you for aid?"

Robert did not stop to think as he said "we are the friends of the black man," for at that very time every negro who sought the Union lines, in the hope of freedom, was reshackled by the Union troops, anxious to conciliate treason, and handed over to the person who claimed to be his master. Sampson knew this, for a system of carrying news prevailed among the slaves of the South really marvelous when we consider their advantages.

"Mausser, de slaves have no frien' but de Lor'. My son, my only chile, 'scaped to de Yankee Army one month ago. His mudder libed on anodder place. His mausser went to de Yankee sojers, an' dey gabe him de chile." Here the tears began to course down the old man's face, and he drew his rough coat-sleeve across his eyes.

“Well, where is your boy now, Sampson?” asked Robert, nervously.

“Gone; gone, mausser, whar de weary head’s at res’. Dey brought Bill back, to make a zample of, his mausser said. An’ dey tied him up afore all de han’s of all de plantations roun’ fur miles. I wuz dar, mausser; I wuz dar, an’ his mudder wuz dar—de chile’s mudder wuz dar!”

The old man walked to the little, rude bedstead, and bowed his head upon his hands as he sat down, while the hot tears flowed through his long fingers. No word was spoken for some time, when the old man raised his head and continued:

“Dey whipped him till de blood poured to de groun’; till he could n’t cry any mor’, an’ jes’ hung by his han’s, wud his head on his shoulder an’ groaned. Dey kep’ him dar all day wud de sun a shinin’ on his bloody back, an’ no one could gib ’im a drink. Dat night dey cut de ropes, an’ Bill fell dead on de groun’! Mauss, do n’t blame me fur cryin’; I’s ole an’ weak, an’ Bill wuz my only boy. I did n’t hab much in de worl’ afore; dar’s nothin’ now.”

Every eye was moist as the old man finished his story, and little Ned sobbed aloud. The old man noticed him, and said:

“Do n’t fret, honey; de good Lor’ knows what’s bes’ fur dose He lubs. I’s willin’; I’s willin’, whatever come.”

Robert was busy for some minutes with his own thoughts. The whole hideousness of slavery dawned on his mind as never before, and when again he spoke it was with the resolve to add freedom to Union in the motives that led him to battle.

"Sampson, my heart is very sad at your story, but your shackles will be melted in the furnace of this terrible war. Wait, God is directing us."

"Yes, mausser, I's willin' to wait, trustin' in de Lor'. An' now, mauss, anything I kin do fur yeh dat won't harm Mauss McIntyre, I'll do."

"I am obliged to you, Sampson. I want you to let me stay here, or some place near here, where our horses can rest till the evening, and then send a man who can guide us to the Tennessee or to some point where I can cross this river."

"Mausser, yeh kin all res' here, I reckon, till de night. I's got a boat about two miles down de crik. We kin put all de tings in dat an' swim de hosses."

"Just the thing, Sampson; I do n't like rafts. You are sure we are safe here?"

"Sartin, shuah, mauss."

"Very well; I will keep a guard up to look out for danger, and I want you to tell me if any white man approaches."

"I will, mauss; an' now I hope yeh kin res', an' dat de Lor' will guard yeh."

Robert stood guard first while the others slept, and Sampson went to the fields.

Though one of the scouts was kept continually on guard during the day, the whole party had a good rest by five in the afternoon. Sampson had shown more interest in this guard duty than could have been expected, for in the early morning he sent out two men some miles from the place, one up the creek and the other out toward the Shiloh road, to report the advance of any white men. Shortly after five the black man stationed up the creek came run-

ning back, breathless with fear and fatigue. He reported ten horsemen, all armed, coming toward the plantation. Sampson was on hand in a moment, and the horses were saddled. Robert in the mean time forced a fifty-dollar United States note into the reluctant hand of the old man.

"I do not want to get you into trouble, Sampson; but where can I find that boat, if I need it?" asked Robert.

Sampson quickly described its location, and gave him the key that unlocked it.

"Now, Sampson, I am off. God bless you! Detain those men, whoever they may be, as long as you can. If I find the boat, and get a half hour's start, I will laugh at the rebels."

"May de Lor' ob Israel watch yeh, mauss!" said Sampson as the scouts mounted. Then, seeing little Ned leaping up behind Robert, he continued: "'Fore Heaven, I'd like to git a hoss fur dat chile, but I've only got mules."

"Thank you, Uncle Sampson, mules are two slow. This horse can carry us," said Robert, as he patted the arched neck of the noble Don. "And, now, good-bye. I will never forget you!"

A repetition of the direction, and a promise from Sampson to meet them at the boat, in case they were not across, shortly after dark, and the scouts rode down the river.

There was no chance to cover up tracks, and no course but the bold one of getting to the boat and crossing before their pursuers were upon them. The horses were fresh, and they passed out of sight of McIntyre's plantation and down the river road, or

rather trail— for it was an irregular bridle-path—in less time than it takes to write. A mile down the river and the path made a detour to the right, but Robert deemed it wisest to keep to the river's bank till they found the boat. About a half mile down the creek they came upon a broad, partially-flooded swamp. They had to ride around it, and in doing so they struck the bridle-path again. That detour cost them fifteen minutes, but they tried to make it up by increasing the speed of the already flying animals. They passed a plantation and the hands coming in from work stopped to gaze in wonder at the excited horsemen. Beyond the plantation Robert recognized the clump of trees below which Sampson told him the boat was fastened. Already he began to feel safe, and, dashing to the river's bank, there was the boat.

“Dismount quick, Gaines; take your rifle and start back to the timber, where you can see any approach. You will know Bentley or that crowd. Fire a pistol if they approach. I will fire one to call you back.”

Gaines sprang from his horse, and with a pale, determined face ran back to the woods.

“Now, unsaddle, men, while I get this boat loose.” As Robert spoke he searched for the key, and at the same time hurried to the frail boat. First one pocket, then another. There was no key.

“Pile in the saddles while I break this lock.” Robert looked around for a stone, but saw none. He seized a heavy stick, and as he raised it to break the staple the crack of Gaines's rifle was heard, followed by a wild yell, which Robert too well knew.

“Dawn, Aleck—your rifles; follow me! Ned, fasten the horses, then come on!”

Robert spoke rapidly, but acted still quicker. With the light, quick bound of an Indian he rushed into the woods, where Gaines stood capping his rifle. He had not fired in vain, for as the four men met a riderless horse dashed past them.

"Bentley and his gang!" said Gaines. "I see them. They have halted. Keep under cover of the tree, and fire coolly every chance."

The pursuers were checked for an instant, then they quickly rallied, and, with pistols cocked, nine horsemen dashed into the wood. Close up within one hundred yards and not a shot was fired; within fifty yards, and the horseman in advance checked up for a moment and fired his pistol at Ned, who was in full sight, advancing. It was a fatal move, for five rifles blazed in an instant, and the first horse tumbled to the ground and the rider sprang from the animal to see three of his companions stretched on the earth.

"Now, boys!" shouted Bentley—for he it was—"we've got 'em. Hurrah!" And he dashed ahead, followed by his mounted comrades.

The scouts had not time to reload their rifles, but drew their pistols and, springing from their cover, fired at the Texans, who were upon them. Gaines was but a few feet from Bentley when both men fired, then with the fierceness of tiger-cats they sprang upon each other with drawn knives. Gaines slipped and went down, but little Ned saw it, and with a powerful blow from his clubbed rifle Bentley was brought to the ground. The remaining Texans hurriedly sprang behind the trees, having dismounted; and Warren, leaving the wounded Gaines on the ground, sought a like shelter in the direction of the horses. But now

a new danger assailed them. Four men, with savage yells, came rushing in from the left of the woods. Robert turned to look at the enemy's re-enforcement, when to his astonishment and delight he saw the leader, a powerful man, stopping and deliberately firing on the Texans. His companions were about to follow his example, when the Texans called out, "We surrender! we surrender!"

"By the ghost of Ginral Jackson, it's better for you," said the large man, advancing. "Drop them guns! Off with them pistols! All right," he continued as the Texans obeyed.

Robert with his companions was still under cover, and thinking this might be a dodge, he waited. There was something in the voice of the large man that sounded familiar. He peered around the tree cautiously again, then drew up, and, in a voice that rang through the woods like a trumpet call, he shouted:

"Hurrah for the Union and General Jackson!"

"Hurrah for the Union and General Jackson!" shouted the large man, as Robert leaped from behind the tree to see approaching him his old friend Tennessee.

"Guard the prisoners!" shouted Robert to his companions, and the next instant the powerful arms of Tennessee were around him.

"Yer a livin' yet—ain't a ghost? Oh, Lor', but this is grand. Oh, I'm willin' ter go under sod now any minute! Yer sure yer alive?" said Tennessee, again feeling Robert's by no means delicate arms.

"Alive and well, thank God, Tennessee, and you are ever my guardian angel. But our friend is wounded; let us help him, then talk."

They hurried over to Gaines, who was stunned by a pistol ball that struck him above the right eye, and glancing passed through the fleshy part of his ear.

"Look up, ole fel," said Tennessee, taking the wounded man's head in his lap and pouring water over the scar from the canteen. "Yeh ain't hurt dangerous, though the cut won't improve yer beauty."

Gaines soon recovered and gazed up wonderingly into the bronzed, yellow-bearded face that looked down on him so kindly.

"Yes, it's me—Tennessee—ole fel. The same what left yeh ter die on the island. I'll tell yeh all bime-by."

As Tennessee spoke Gaines rose, and feeling his wounded head, he stared again at Tennessee, then at Robert, his companions, the Texans, and the three new arrivals.

"Robert, am I in my right mind? Is this Tennessee? Are we safe?" asked Gaines, in laughable surprise.

"Yes, Andy, we are safe, and there stands our friend Tennessee," said Robert.

Gaines was not demonstrative, but he threw his arms about Tennessee and said :

"Oh, my old friend, thank God; you are well and here ; forgive me for ever having doubted you."

"We'll talk all that arter awhile. Now, let's see these here wounded chaps."

Giving directions to Aleck and Ned to secure all the horses, and to the old man, who was as cool as the bravest during the fight, to bathe Gaines's head and bind it up, Robert and Tennessee started in the direction of the prostrate Texans. Reaching Bentley, Tennessee stooped, put his ear to the bleeding man's breast, and rising, said :

“He ’s a livin’, Mr. Warren. I don’t wish him ter die, fur if it wuz n’t fur him I would n’t be here. Here, Arkansas—yer Ingin nation—take this chap ter the river an’ wash his wounds; we’ll be down thar directly. Long Sam, make them pris’ners stan’ in a pile, an’ shoot the fust one budges.”

Tennessee seemed by some right to have assumed command. His men promptly obeyed, while he and Warren examined the men lying on the ground. The unerring rifles of the scouts had done their work. Three men lay dead beside the still struggling horse, and near the farther edge of the woods, with a red hole in his forehead, from which the blood slowly trickled, they found the man on whom Gaines had fired the alarm shot. While they were standing above the body, an elderly man, very pale and very much excited, appeared on the ground, and in an authoritative tone asked:

“Gentlemen, what is this fuss? What does all this shooting mean?”

“It means death,” said Tennessee, pointing to the dead Texans.

“My God, gentlemen, you have not surely been killing your friends, the southern soldiers?”

“No, sir,” said Robert, looking the old planter in the eye. “We have been fighting our enemies. We are northern soldiers.”

“Yes,” added Tennessee, as he noticed the old man’s alarmed face; “we fights fur the Union. Come with me a moment.”

The planter obeyed mechanically till he reached the group of prisoners. “Thar, stan’ thar. Long Sam, do n’t let this man move.”

“Yeh kin bet yer bottom rock I’ll make movin’ bad work if this ole brick tries it on,” said Long Sam, stepping back a pace, the better to cover his prisoners.

Robert called Aleck Cameron and placed him on guard with Long Sam. Then he and Tennessee went to the river. Gaines was walking about with his head bandaged in a yellow handkerchief, like a faded hospital flag, and Bentley began to show evidences of animation. Robert gave him some brandy from a pocket flask he carried, which had the effect of reviving him, for he groaned, opened his eyes, looking around upon the people who stood near him, then closed them again.

It was now nearly dark, and after a short consultation it was decided to cross the river with the prisoners that night, and mature a plan of action after getting over. One of the best horses of those captured was selected for little Ned—Gaines, who had seen the boy’s heroic action, declaring that after the war he would make him a present of a whole corral of mustangs, and four more reserved for Tennessee and his friends. The arms, saddles, and bridles of the Texans not needed were then placed in the boat, the chain of which had been broken, and Aleck Cameron and Arkansas scattered them about in the creek. At this juncture the faithful Sampson appeared, and Robert took him aside and hurriedly explained the state of affairs. He told him he would need the boat that night, and might have to sink it, and, in anticipation of this, he paid Sampson. He also directed him to have the negroes on the plantation near by bury the dead in the morning. This Sampson promised, and invoking blessings on Robert’s head the old man returned.

All the saddles were ferried over, and then the horses taken one at a time. The prisoners were crossed two at a time, with two of the scouts, one rowing, the other guarding. The old planter raved and expostulated till Long Sam intimated that they invariably scalped men for carrying on in that ridiculous way where he came from, and that in order to keep in his hand he would raise the old gentleman's hair on the slightest provocation. This had a soothing effect on the planter.

Back some distance from the wooded bank of the river to which they had crossed, they built a fire, and placed near it on their saddle blankets the wounded Bentley. The blow on his head was severe, but not dangerous; there was, however, a pistol-ball in his right breast, close to the heart, and Tennessee shook his head when he saw it, while Robert, who understood the anatomy about the wound, felt that but a few hours remained for the brave, misguided Texan. Robert's force now consisting of nine men, he divided it into four reliefs for guard duty, Ned and his grandfather going on first.

As they sat by the fire on the opposite side to the prisoners, Robert and Gaines begged Tennessee to tell them his story, and how he came to be on hand so opportunely that day. But he insisted first on hearing their's, and so Robert described the storm, and the flood, and subsequent escape. Tennessee sat with his hands to his face, saying at times, "It seems like a dream, or a yarn, or something." Robert narrated every incident till their meeting that evening, after which Tennessee insisted on shaking hands again.

By this time little Ned and the old man were relieved, and Robert introduced them regularly to Tennessee, and asked them to come and hear his story. Long Sam and Indian Nation stood guard, and Tennessee, taking a huge chew of tobacco as a suitable preliminary to his narrative, related in detail the incidents already known to the reader up to the evening of his escape. While Tennessee spoke old Dawn's eyes were fastened on him with an intense and wholly unusual expression. With the utmost earnestness he heard him tell of his successful escape from prison, though a companion was killed in the attempt; of his journey into the Cherokee country and remaining there till he had to fight on one side or the other; how he left, and with Indian Nation, who was a Union man—he did n't know his regular name—went to Arkansas, and had to join the rebel army; how he met Long Sam and Arkansas in Price's army, and how they all deserted to Tennessee, where they hoped to find the Union army; how at Memphis he enlisted with his companions in a regiment which was in East Tennessee, and how the rebels gave him transportation there. Finally how he stopped at Bolivar, though out of his way, under the pretense of seeing a brother, who did n't live there, and how he recognized Bentley in the street as a man who sent Rose after Robert Warren. "I longed to go fur that feller, though he's helpless now," concluded Tennessee. "I saw him awful worried in town, an' arter a while a whole gang, more than twenty, started out of town on the Shiloh road. I knowed thar wuz no Yankees out thar, but some trubble, an' I could n't git over follerin 'em. We all four started, an' of course the critters left us away

behind. We dodged the pickets an' got on the trail One by one the critters gin out, but we've all chased Ingins, an' yeh could n't git us off the trail more 'n a bloodhound. We com'd up with them fellers this mornin'. They just tried the Shiloh road ten miles. They ain't much on a trail. We waited at the cross-roads, knowin' they'd come back, an' when they did we wuz arter 'em. I know'd more an' more thar wuz some one I'd orter help if I follered them men. Fine critters they have, tho' played I reckon. Wall, yeh know, I cum'd up durin' the fight, an' when I heerd yeh, I forgot the journey an' the hunger. An' now, Cap., we 're heah safe an' sound.'

"Yes, Tennessee, and hungry," said Robert, opening his saddle-bags and handing out the plentiful supply of provisions which the generous and thoughtful Sampson had stuffed into the saddle-bags at the last moment.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FATHER AND SON.

During Tennessee's narrative old Dawn gradually drew nearer to the speaker, and his face assumed by degrees an intense earnestness and interest that even the thrilling story would not warrant. In truth, he did not hear the story, though the strong, deep voice thrilled the old man like the airs of his youth just called to mind, and with wondering eyes he gazed from the fire to the powerful, flexible form of the hunter, as if trying to reconcile some changes, or solve some mystery that troubled his own mind.

Tennessee stopped speaking, and after going to where Bentley lay, and making some changes in his position to ease his pain, he walked back, and, pulling out his tobacco-pouch as he sat down, he said to the old man :

“Smoke with me, frien'? It's no pleasure to smoke alone by a camp-fire.”

“Sartin, stranger, sartin,” said the old man, looking earnestly into the good-natured blue eyes of Tennessee, and mechanically reaching out his hand for the tobacco.

“Stranger,” again the old man spoke, after lighting his pipe, “yeh've lived in Texas right smart, I reckon?”

“Yes, ole man; I’ve been thar purty much since I wuz a boy, an’ I knows ’bout as much of that ar’ country as mos’ men.”

“Yeh knows lots of folks thar, I’m sure?” and as the old man spoke he edged closer to where Tennessee sat.

“No, frien’, I ain’t much at gittin’ ’quainted; but I knows a few, I reckon,” said Tennessee, blowing out a cloud of smoke and good-naturedly preparing himself to answer the old man’s questions as long as he wished to ask them.

The old man sat looking at the fire for some time. His pipe had gone out and was held between his clasped hands. After a few minutes, without looking up, he began, as if speaking to himself:

“Stranger, I had a boy once—my eldest—and a long time ago he went to Texas. It hurt me a heap to have him leave me, for he wuz right smart help, an’ they did n’t git up boys with any kinder or braver hearts than mine. But I let him go, fur I had others a comin’ on, an’ I know’d my boy ’d come back if he ever larned I wuz pushed. Wall, the war come, an’ the rebels killed all but little Ned; he’s Ned’s boy. It’s right hard fur an old man, but of late I keep thinkin’ that Sim’ll turn up. It’d take off all the load if I could see Jim agin.”

The old man looked up. Tennessee was standing beside him. He met the old man’s gaze, and his heart leaped to his mouth. A haze came over his eyes as with outstretched arms he knelt beside his father, and clasping him to his broad breast he said, in a low, tremulous voice:

“Look at me, dad; I’m Jim. I’m yer boy.”

The old man pushed back the heavy masses of sun-burned, fair hair from Tennessee's white forehead and said :

"Thank God for this, Jim. Thank God thar's one left besides little Ned. My heart felt warm fur yeh from the first, an' I hoped yeh wuz my boy."

The father and son sat down together, and the witnesses of their meeting felt the joy they could not then speak. Tennessee pulled little Ned over on his knee, and looking into his bright, youthful face, said :

"So, you 're Ned's boy. Wall, now, who 'd'a thought it? My face was as smooth as yours whin I left Tennessee, an' I reckon I looked right smart as you do. I wuz n't bad lookin' then by a long chalk—was I, dad?"

"No, Jim, you wuz allers likely," said the old man, looking with pride at the bearded face of his giant boy.

"Mr. Warren, the Dawns is purty heavy for Ginral Jackson, do n't yeh think?"

"I certainly do, Tennessee," replied Robert, who went on to relate how he met his father and little Ned that dark night near Crab Orchard, and how the boy was wounded.

"Wall, it's all right now. But this war has brought some things roun' cur'us. 'Pears like a dream since I follered yeh out the Shreveport road with that houn', Rose."

As Tennessee spoke, Gaines ordered the next detail for guard, and the old man insisted on going on again with Tennessee, offering as an excuse that he would "feel kinder lonesome ef he wuz n't near Jim."

The night wore on, and Bentley sank into a quiet

sleep. About four o'clock he roused himself, and looking up at Robert, who was sitting beside him, he asked:

"Have I been dreaming, Bob? Have I said anything?"

"No; I have been sitting here, and you slept quietly."

"Bob, I've led a pretty wild life. It's nearly ended though," and Bentley laid his hand on the wound, from which the blood still slowly oozed through the bandages.

"I have no reason to love you, Bentley; but I believe you brave and honest, and I hope you will live to return to your people, and, after the war, to Texas."

Robert stooped and wiped the wounded man's damp forehead and gave him another sip of brandy.

"Bob, I can't live, and before I die I want to tell you all. I want to tell you that I objected to keeping your father in prison, and it hurt me worse than this wound when he died."

"My God! my father dead! Did you say my father was dead?" said Robert, in a voice of agony and passion, as he laid his hand on the wounded man and shook him for a reply.

Bentley did not reply. He made an effort as if to speak, then his face grew deathly pale, and a thin, bloody foam gathered about his lips. He had fainted.

Robert was half prepared for this terrible information, still it cut him to the heart. Tennessee hastened to his side, and placing his ear to Bentley's heart, he said hurriedly, "Give him more brandy, Mr. Warren, I'm afeard he's dyin'!"

Robert raised Bentley's head, stooping so as to take it in his lap, and poured the brandy slowly between his cold, bloody lips.

Tennessee in the meantime tightened the bandages and stopped the blood.

"Yeh musn't rile this chap, Mr. Warren; he's purty near gone. Ef he was n't as strong as a hoss he'd a died when he was fust hit. Thar, he's comin' to. Let him rest a bit."

Robert adjusted the blankets and walked away. It was very dark, and the prisoners near the fire slept like children, little Ned lying with his arm thrown over one stalwart fellow's breast.

"Oh, God! this agony; this war is horrible!" said Robert, as he buttoned closer his coat and walked into the darkness, where the dying fire at times lit up the great, leafless trees and threw out shadows that were lost in the blackness beyond. As he stood musing Gaines came up and said:

"Robert, I am sorry to hear of your trouble."

"I know you are, Andy, I know you are," and Robert laid his hand kindly on the shoulder of his friend.

"This is no place nor time, Robert, to give way to grief. Sometimes I have been so dejected that I envied those who slept in the grave without heart-aches. But God has given us work to do. Let us bear manfully every trial He casts upon us."

"You are right, Andy; but I could not help this sadness. You know how intensely I loved my father, and how, during our arduous duties, I have looked forward to the time when I could tell him all, as we sat together in the old home, and war with us was a

thing of the past. But I will bear it. Come, let us see poor Bentley; I fear he cannot live long."

They walked back to where Bentley lay, and sat down beside him. He turned at the noise and whispered, as he tried to hold out his hand:

"Bob, do you hate me?"

"No, God knows I do not. I would suffer much to give you life," said Robert earnestly, as he took the cold and once powerful hand in his.

"Bob—and you, Andy—I want you to forgive me. I judged you wrong. I know now, what I thought then, Townsend lied."

Bentley stopped, for the talking pained him.

"I forgive you, from my soul, for whatever you have done to me," said Gaines, in a choking voice.

"And I too, Bentley," said Robert. "I never could think you guilty of an intentional meanness. You were always too brave and honest."

"Yes," interrupted Bentley, with failing breath, "God knows I am honest, Bob, and always meant to do right."

"You knew me, Bentley, and you knew Townsend. I am sure it was only the excitement of the election that induced you to think that I could be a murderer or a robber."

"Yes, Bob, but the excitement's past. I am going down. I can hear the water. The river is close at hand, and I'm moving out."

Bentley closed his eyes and lay still for a few moments. Then he roused himself as with an effort.

"Bob, call my men—all that are left."

Robert woke up the prisoners and brought them over to where Bentley lay. He motioned them to stoop, then shook hands with each.

“Boys, you’ve always done your duty. I hope you’ll get back to do it again. I’ve fought with you for the last time, but God will give victory to the right. You are prisoners. If Bob Warren lets you go, do what he may ask; it will be for your good and his. Take my last love to all.”

Those bronzed Texans were unused to emotion. They looked too strong and coarse to be capable of much feeling, but as Bentley ceased speaking their eyes were moist with the tears they could not choke down, and each clasped the cold hand of the commander they loved, promising to obey his last order.

“Is the sun up? It feels warmer.”

“No, Bentley, but the day is breaking,” said Robert.

“Yes, I see the light, the light, and my mother, my mother, my mother——”

His voice gradually sank, and at the last word, “mother,” his clasp of Robert’s hand relaxed, the dying fire in his eyes went out, his head fell back, and Bentley, the brave and misguided, was dead.

The sun came up bright and warm. The early spring birds flew through the budding trees, and at times a bee buzzed by in search of the first sweet flowers. A large live oak, with branches drooping to the ground, grew near the camp, beside the river. Here they scooped a grave with their knives deep between the gnarled roots, and, wrapping the young Texan in his blanket, they lowered him down and placed his sword and pistols on his breast. Then they threw back the earth, while Robert carved in the bark, “Bentley, bravest of the Rangers, killed March, 1862.”

“Saddle up your horses, men, we must start at

once," said Robert, walking in the direction of the prisoners. "I will find it difficult to take you through to the Union lines with me, and still more difficult to let you go," said Robert, addressing the Rangers. "You promised Bentley just before he died that you would do as I desired for your own good. Do you still stand by that promise?"

The Texans signified their willingness to do whatever Robert desired consistent with their duty as Confederates.

"I am satisfied with your promise. I will parole you at once, on condition that you do not report to the Confederate army inside of twenty-four hours. This I must demand in order to prevent pursuit. What say you?"

The Texans agreed to this, and Robert prepared and took each man's parole.

"I wish you to take this note to Colonel Wharton for me; it will explain all about your capture and Bentley's death. I have given you the credit which as brave men you deserve. Now, good-bye, and I hope when again we meet it may be as friends."

The prisoners shook hands all round with their captors, and as the scouts rode eastward through the woods the Rangers took an opposite course up White Oak Creek.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SHILOH.

The evening following that on which Robert Warren and his men left White Oak Creek they learned that the Union Army under Grant had moved up on transports to Pittsburg Landing, on the Tennessee. General Buell was still behind, in the direction of Danville, with a large force. Deeming the information he possessed to be of immediate advantage to General Grant, who was only twenty miles from Corinth, where Beauregard was gathering the flower of the Mississippi valley to crush out the Northern army in Tennessee, Robert determined to push on in that direction at once. On the following day he reported in person, and received the praise of "the silent soldier" for his invaluable service. His regiment was back with Nelson, and General Grant, who seemed to be thoroughly posted about the neighboring country, ordered him with his companions to report to General W. H. L. Wallace till General Nelson, who was daily expected, came up.

Robert had Tennessee and his friends mustered into the service and assigned to Captain Allen Warren's company. For nearly a week they lay quietly in encampment between Shiloh Church and Snake Creek, two miles south of the three houses dignified by the name of "Pittsburg Landing." The country was

wild, undulating, and wooded; the scattering farm-houses were of the rude kind peculiar to first settlements. With the exception of an occasional thunder-storm, the weather was delightful, and the swelling buds and fresh green carpet of grass, with wild-flower patterns and myriads of vocal birds, made a picture of beauty and peace with which the circling line of camps and martial dwellers seemed out of harmony. Surely General Grant did not appreciate the strength, daring, and cunning of the Confederates at Corinth, or, if he did, he had a more than soldier's confidence in the conquerors of Donelson, his mighty Western men. No fortifications, breastworks, or abattis were thrown up in a section peculiarly adapted to them, and where half the country was densely timbered. No cavalry force far in the advance to apprise him of danger from the direction of Corinth. But in a solid semi-circle, somewhat advanced by Prentiss on the left center, near the Corinth road, General Grant held his army, with a deep, unfordable river flowing directly in his rear. Defeat in such a place would bring on him the censure of the world and the execration of his countrymen. But the iron will and cool hand of the general were equal to any emergency, and at Shiloh it seemed as if he increased the danger, just once in his life, to show what he could do when all seemed lost.

The evening of April 5th came bright and pleasanter for the recent rains. Around from Lick Creek to Pittsburg Landing the white tents of Hurlburt, Prentiss, Sherman, McClerland, and Smith caught the red rays of the setting sun, and looked like opal jewels in the vast setting of dark green. From a point eight miles

further down the river the blue smoke curled up peacefully from the camp-fires of Lew Wallace, and before the landing two gunboats swung lazily at anchor. Parade and inspection were over and the details made. Around a thousand camp-fires the soldiers were busy with the evening meal, and jest and laughter rang jovial volleys through the woods. Here and there on the low bushes the lately-washed clothes were left to dry. The horses champed their grain near the wagons, the batteries, and headquarters as contentedly as if just in from the carriage or the plow. Groups of officers in undress gathered to smoke and chat, while from along the line for miles the music of the regimental bands came in swelling notes to the river. The flags before the different headquarters were taken down, the sunlight blended into gray, the gray into darkness, with the brightest of stars, and the camp-fires shone warmly on beaming, sunburned faces, and lit up the green trees with a marvelous beauty. Songs associated with home came from knots about the bivouacs, while here and there the company wit kept his comrades in a roar by his amusing narration of his own adventures. Nine o'clock came, and from right to left the brazen throats of the bugle sounded "Taps." Quickly the fires became deserted, the laughter and song and story died out, and the white tents were filled with forty thousand sleeping men, silent as a city of the dead. So passed the quiet hours, the soft, mossy earth refusing sound to the feet of the watchful sentinel—quiet as the grave in which, when another night comes, hundreds of the resting soldiers will be gathered for the last long sleep. At times the reliefs pass rapidly from post to post, the

challenge ringing out like an intruder on the stillness ; this and the gallop of the grand rounds, with jingling spurs and clashing sabers and startling demands from the cover of somber trees of "Halt ! who goes there ?" then all is calm and quiet, as if war never were.

Four o'clock came, and the stars grew less distinct in the blending of gray that told the dawn of April 6 had come. Along the extended line the sound of the reveille ran through the Union camp, and forty thousand men rose from their blankets at the call. But blending with the bugle call came the wild cries of flying men, the exultant yells of a pursuing foe, the boom of artillery, and the rattle and roar of musketry. A hundred drums drowned for the time the sound of battle as in one horrid din they rattled through the camps, one hour ago so peaceful, that summons to battle, the "long roll." Half-dressed men seized their arms and frantically rushed into line. From the left frightened men came pouring back, adding to the confusion, and by their wild cries demoralizing the half-formed regiments. "Prentiss is cut to pieces !" "Back to the river !" "My God, we are ruined !" These and a hundred other evidences of defeat greeted Hurlburt and Hildebrand. Nor was this all. On the very heels of the flying Union soldiers long gray lines, in magnificent order of battle, poured through the woods, and with a force irresistible as the ocean's waves they struck the first division and dashed it into bleeding fragments. In vain did Sherman try to gather his command ; the tide of battle struck him, and hundreds of his half-dressed men perished in their tents or grasping the arms they had not time to use. General W. H. L. Wallace, with whom were our

friends, rallied, but not in time to stem the torrent. By ten o'clock the rebels held the Union camp, Prentiss's division was literally smashed to pieces, and eight thousand cowed, demoralized men, in the very agony of fear, sought the protection of the river's bank, and added to the terror and confusion by their cries of distress. Sherman, with a daring that would be called reckless, were it not for the coolness and skill of his action, dashed along his broken brigades and re-formed them. Taylor, Waterhouse, and Beer he placed in position with their batteries on McClelland's left, and here for the time was the most desperate fighting and terrific carnage. Though shot through the hand, and the blood dripping from his long fingers, he worked like a Trojan to remedy the evils of his unfortified position. Around the left and center the battle surged, the enemy neglecting the right, which Lew Wallace, eight miles off, was hurrying up to protect. Their plan seemed to be to double the line from the left back upon itself and sweep it clear to the river, beyond which resistance would be useless. Hurlburt and W. H. L. Wallace, though shattered from the first stunning blow, had with them the flower of Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. Below a number of open fields, within sight of their camps, now held by the enemy, they re-formed. Here Beauregard commanded in person, and three times he hurled division after division upon the thin blue lines in front. But there Hurlburt and Wallace held their ground, strewing the smoking earth with dead each time the enemy charged. For five hours and a half the left was thus held, till at length, under a murderous fire of artillery, this noble

division fell back within sight of the river, where the wooden gunboats *Tyler* and *Lexington* were firing shells over the Union line into the ranks of the enemy. They fell back, bearing with them the dying General Wallace, whose men were the last to yield before the overpowering force of the enemy.

By five in the afternoon Grant's whole army was crowded around the Landing, and a circle of three quarters of a mile would inclose all his troops. Lew Wallace, who ought to have been up, lost time by a mistake, and was still far to the right, beyond Snake Creek. Still from the outer line of the circle, where companies, regiments, brigades, and divisions were blended without distinction, the fires of death blazed, and men fell by hundreds where so few could be spared. By half-past five there were not fifteen thousand men in the Union lines. Out of the grand army of the previous night five thousand were prisoners, eight thousand dead or wounded in the woods and camps which the enemy held, and as many were demoralized and unorganized along the river's bank. The enemy had captured a dozen battle-flags and thirty pieces of artillery, which our army could not afford to lose in any circumstances. At this time the firing slackened, and a tall horseman within full sight of the Union lines rode along the enemy's front, forming his columns for one grand, final charge, which was to sweep out the Yankee army south of the Tennessee. Wherever he went he was cheered vociferously, and an old soldier who stood, musket in hand, near Robert Warren, said: "That's the damned traitor Albert Sidney Johnston." In the mean time Grant, with his staff, occupied the Union center, near the Landing. He was evidently

as cool as if there had been no battle. Webster was there preparing his artillery for the struggle, and the firm, compressed lips of the men along the line showed the determination with which the foe would be met. Only a few minutes of painful anxiety, during which the men gazed at the forming foe, then back at the black river, praying, as Wellington is said to have prayed at Waterloo, that the sun would go down or re-enforcements come up. Lew Wallace and Buell were needed now if ever. Yet there was no help from them, and *the men grasped more firmly their weapons and looked up for aid.* The rebel lines closed up, then suddenly from forty pieces of artillery they poured in a murderous fire on the devoted band of Union heroes, and a storm of musket-balls came driving like hail from the line of twenty thousand men. There was but the show of a reply to this deluge of shot and shell. Then came on in splendid array, with hats slouched and pieces trailed, the divisions of Hardee and Polk, with Breckinridge's brigade. It was the last chance for Grant. His infantry fire was reserved till a pistol ball would kill a man in the foremost line of the enemy. Then began the very harvest of death. Infantry, batteries, and gunboats, with the rapidity of lightning and accuracy of fate, hurled out a storm of missiles before which the first rank melted and those behind faltered and were broken. Each man in the Union line felt the fate of the Army depended on him, and as the sun went down behind the black clouds a cheer of triumph rang out from Pittsburg Landing; the enemy's last desperate charged was repulsed, and from the southern bank of the river came the shouts from Buell's cavalry advance.

The night of that fearful Sabbath came to the valley over which hung the shadow of death. No rest for the starving, wearied men, who lay on their arms and "anxiously thought of the morrow." The enemy were reveling in the captured camps, and the wounded were uncared for; still through the night the stragglers were reorganized, and Lew Wallace joined his division close up to the right. During the black hours the steamers were busy passing back and forth, while regiments left their decks and took position in the extended lines. All was quiet as the previous night, but how different! Occasionally a screeching shell from the gunboats flew over the Union ranks, while, as if in mockery of the battle sounds, "the thunder drums of heaven" rolled and rattled, and the battle-field was drenched with rain.

Monday morning, the 7th, came, and thirty thousand fresh men were ready to confront the victorious foe. On the ground held by the noble Wallace, Nelson placed his gallant brigade. To his right came Crittenden, then McCook, Hurlburt, McClernand and Sherman. Divided among the latter two divisions were the remnants of Wallace and Prentiss's commands, and on the extreme right was stationed Lew Wallace's fighting division. It was noticeable that in all these divisions there was but one regiment from east of the Ohio line, viz., the gallant Seventy-seventh Pennsylvania, under the command of Colonel Stambaugh.

It was past seven in the morning when Lew Wallace began the battle by a brisk artillery fire, to which the enemy was not slow to respond. Gradually the thunder spread along the line, till Nelson took it up, and

advancing his command beyond Hurlburt's old camp, he met the enemy, who evidently intended to try the crushing-out-in-detail process practiced so successfully the day before. They massed and charged Nelson, but it was to find themselves mowed down by Terrell's howitzers, and harassed by Jackson's cavalry. Westward the rebel line surged and struck Crittenden, punishing Smith's brigade, but the success was short-lived, for Boyle and Woods rushed to the rescue and hurled back the astonished foe, capturing a battery of their artillery. Still west the rebels struck, till McCook checked them in their desperate efforts to capture an Illinois battery, around which the Sixth Indiana fought like bulldogs. Then Rousseau, McClermand, and Hurlburt, the latter with jaded but still able men, pushed forward toward the old camps, driving back Bragg in confusion, and sending their shouts of victory westward to Wallace and Sherman. The enemy was tired of the assaults that cost him so fearfully, and about noon began a terrific fire, which was simply a mask for his retreat. To the left, where Nelson fought, the rebels had been working a battery, captured the previous day, with murderous effect. As Nelson advanced, Jackson's cavalry was ordered up a ravine to take the battery in flank. Robert Warren with his men had reported to their company the previous night, when it came up with Buell, and though they had fought bravely in the confused ranks of yesterday's battle, all felt better in the saddle with their own regiment. Up the ravine, rough and rugged, the regiment pushed, and under a galling fire they ascended the side within two hundred yards of the battery,

which was well supported. Quickly, while the regiment was forming, a section wheeled to oppose them. Then the sabers leaped along the line, and the bugle sounded the "charge," which the men shouted as their horses leaped forward to obey the summons. The artillery opened, ploughing gaps in the double line of crowding horses, while the infantry poured in a fire before which many a saddle was emptied, and many a gallant steed fell suddenly when half the distance had been gone over, Don leaped ahead of the line as if in a furious race. Robert in the stirrups, his sword hanging to his wrist by the knot, with all his force jerked the bridle to stop the frantic animal. The bit broke in the effort, and the uncontrolled horse, with the bit dangling at his ears, swept down toward the rebel guns. To jump off would be to be killed by the advancing line, which now cheered wildly. To go on was certain death. All occurred in an instant. Robert grasped his sword, cheered back to the advancing line, and with one lightning thought of home and loved ones, he went straight as an arrow for the guns, behind which a soldier, blackened with smoke, stood with a lanyard in his hand. A moment of flame and smoke, then a flying leap across the gun, and Robert Warren, on the plunging, unmanageable Don, was slashing with his saber like an enraged giant among gunners, battery, horses, and infantry. A few seconds and the whole line rushed over the guns with deafening cheers, and the infantry supporting turned and fled without order. The cheer from the left went westward, and the whole line advanced over the old camping ground, through the tents filled with wounded, and close behind the routed enemy, who left his dead and wounded

on the field. Thus, after thirty-eight hours of the most terrible fighting ever witnessed before on the continent, victory was snatched by valor from the jaws of defeat, and the flags of the Union were pushed by patriots still further South.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE IDEAL BATTLE.

There is a fascination in the stories of battle that thrills one—the long, gleaming lines of steel; the death-dealing batteries; the fiery, restless horses; the waving flags and standards, and, ringing above all sounds the trumpet's brazen call, or the martial airs of the bands. We read of the sweeping charges of masses of horsemen, with flashing swords and terrifying cheers, and our hearts throb as we picture the opposing hollow squares of infantry receiving the charge with kneeling lines of bayonets and a storm of deadly fire. In the old stories that captivated us there was a mathematical accuracy in the movements described. Regiments were always organized, batteries always working with fine precision in the right place, and the cavalry were held to be pushed forward at the moment of the enemy's weakness; murderous storms of lead; irresistible charges, where swords and bayonets clashed, and standards rose and fell above the din and smoke and tumult; electrifying commands from well-loved leaders, and dying cheers from bleeding heroes; band-men to care for the wounded; hospitals ready to receive them; and a general idea pervading all that every movement was in accordance with a previously-arranged plan by the great genius commanding—all these went to make up our notions of a battle. To

some extent these pictures, as applied to European conflicts, were correct, but they were wholly inapplicable to any fight during the late American war. As at Shiloh, so in a hundred other fights. Long, opposing lines of infantry and artillery at varying distances, stretching over fields and through woods, poured deadly volleys of shot and shell into the confronting lines. Here a company of skirmishers, feeling the uncertain front; there a regiment or brigade dashing forward to break the opposing line. But, as a rule, it was one whirlwind of fire, before which companies and regiments melted. The individuality of the soldier was never lost. Groups of broken organizations rallied to fight on their own responsibility. Men sprang out of line to aid a falling comrade or secure a wounded officer. There was one rallying point in moments of defeat, where the men gathered with determined faces: the center of the regiment, where the colors were held above the smoke, and guarded with a desperate valor, even when the battle was felt to be lost. To the rear of the lines of battle the wounded who could walk usually hobbled or staggered back, trying as they moved to stop the bleeding till they could reach the field hospital of their command. As at Shiloh, we had but few pursuits after a conflict, for there were but few decisive battles. Each side fought with a desperate determination, and the close of an engagement saw both sides too much exhausted for a long retreat or a vigorous pursuit. But on the field there was all the suffering and carnage which gave the red color to the old battle pictures. The dead, here in piles where they fell about the colors or in defense of a battery; there in irregu-

lar lines where they dropped in the ranks ; in the advance a blue coat or a gray, sprinkled where they fell on the skirmish line ; in every attitude—one grasping his gun, with his face to the foe, and his strong breast torn by the exploded shell ; another lying on his back, with open mouth and purple face, and a small, red hole through his throat ; a boy, resting his fair head on his bent arm, as if asleep, while the blood in a black pool shone below his white forehead ; a strong, heavily-bearded man, sitting against a tree which a cannon shot had struck, while his torn, crushed limbs are gathered up under him, and fragments of white bone stick through the red flesh and blue pants ; a horse, with the ground torn about him, marking the agony of his death-struggle, while the extended neck and head are clotted with blood ; a group of horses, dead near some broken cannon, harness tangled and torn, and a great, black hole in the ground, and pieces of charred wood lying about, telling that a caisson had exploded there ; a horse and a rider dead side by side, one of the soldier's feet still fast in the stirrup, and his sword broken in the fall ; a pool of dirty water, with a circle of dead and wounded, friend and foe, gathered about it. These are the silent horrors of the field. Who can portray the suffering of the wounded, the groans and cries of distress, the appeals for aid, the prayers for death to come in relief, the parched lips and swollen tongues begging for water ; the shattered arms and mangled limbs, bandaged with torn clothes, or the bleeding stayed by compressed belts ? On the field, when the fight has closed, there are no foes, and a common humanity and common suffering blot out the late anger and revenge,

and mercy for the time takes possession of the field of strife.

With Albert Sidney Johnston killed, and eleven thousand dead and wounded in the hands of the Union forces, and the great object of the battle unaccomplished, the Confederates fell slowly back to Corinth, for the time broked and dispirited. A short pursuit by General Sherman resulted in the capture of a large number of stragglers, but three days elapsed before Grant's shattered army was ready to obey Halleck's order for an investment of Corinth.

A few days after the battle Robert, who was again with his company, much to Archy's delight, received a note from Colonel Jackson, asking him to come at once to his tent. Supposing there was more scouting prepared for him, he reported immediately to the colonel, who received him with great warmth of manner, and without the stiff etiquette peculiar to strict military business.

"Warren, I must congratulate you," said the colonel; "that affair at Shiloh on Monday has made you famous."

"I am truly sorry to hear it, colonel; for, as I told you before, it was the merest accident, and I am not entitled to the praise I have received from you and my comrades."

"We are the best judges of that, my dear fellow. I wish to tell you that E Company is without a commissioned officer, and I have sent in your name for the captaincy. This meets the approval of General Nelson, whom by the way we must go and see at once." As the colonel spoke he put on his hat and belt, and left the tent with Robert. General Nelson

was a huge burly man, looking more like a retired English sea captain than an American soldier. His face was florid, his manner brusque and at times apparently rude; yet he had the kindest and bravest of hearts, and under his rough exterior he carried the most genial of dispositions.

"Hello, Jackson! glad to see you; come in, come in! Here, damn you," to the black servant, "get stools for the gentlemen. There, be seated."

General Nelson thus addressed Colonel Jackson and his companion as they entered his tent.

"This is Mr. Warren, general, the young man who led the charge on the battery in front of your division."

"The devil you say! Why, Warren, give me your hand. Bravest thing I ever saw in my life. Astounded those battery-men. Here, Piper, the whisky. Must drink Captain Warren's health."

"I am very thankful for your kindness, general, but it is due to the regiment to say that I do not deserve it. My bit broke early in the charge, and I lost all control of my horse, a very spirited animal. Of course there was nothing left but to ride for the battery."

As Robert said this his face grew a deeper bronze and he looked down at his boots.

"Why the devil didn't you jump off, then, when your horse got so far ahead?" asked the general with a chuckling laugh.

"In truth I did think about it," replied Robert, "but I made up my mind that it was death in any event, so I preferred dying at the hands of the enemy."

"By the Gods of war, sir, you're a brick! You did just right. Here, your health, Captain Warren."

The general passed the glasses, and all drank.

“I have learned your history, captain, and let me say I respect you—yes, sir, I respect you. To-night I will see General Buell, and I think we can fix you all right.”

At these compliments Robert blushed more deeply, and got so confused that he could only stammer out his thanks. The general saw this and changed the conversation, and Robert declared as he left the tent with Colonel Jackson that he never met a more delightful man in his life. To which the colonel replied :

“There are a great many opinions about General Nelson as a gentleman, but only one as to his patriotism and bravery.”

The news of Robert's promotion spread through the camp like wildfire, and earnest congratulations poured in from all sides. His cousin Allen, however, was deeply affected, and held Robert's hand for a long time as he expressed his satisfaction at his being an officer.

That night, as they sat at supper, they were both struck and amused by the expression of undisguised delight on Archy's face. That very respectable fellow was acting as if he had partaken largely of laughing-gas, with the happiest possible effect. He laughed at every plate and knife he placed. He chuckled and laughed at the frying meat and roasting sweet potatoes. He smiled serenely at every passing form. At times he would stand twisting his canvas apron around his hands and staring with an expression of suppressed mirth at his old master ; and then, as if unable to contain himself, he would burst out with a hobbling,

musical laugh, interspersed with such expressions as "Praise de Lor'!" "Ki yi, what 'ud Susey say?" "O golly, I knowd it, shuah!"

It was impossible for Robert not to notice these very peculiar proceedings of his ex-servant. So he did what Archy had been trying to get him to do for some time—that is, to ask him the cause of his excessive hilarity.

"Do n't yeh know, Mauss Robert? Do n't yeh know, shuah?" And Archy chuckled again to such an extent that in prudence he left the back of Captain Allen's camp-stool and gave the fire a joyous kick.

"I can 't say that I do know, Archy; but I assure you I am very happy to see you in such spirits," said Robert, looking up with a sly smile at Archy, who had returned and was again torturing his apron.

"Yeh 're shuah yeh does n't know?" again asked Archy.

"Yes, sure."

"O golly, Mauss Robert."

"Well, Archy, out with it."

"Mauss Robert, yeh 's an offsir. Ki yi, doesn't yeh know yeh 's an offsir?" and Archy opened his great eyes and gave a wondering laugh.

"Yes, Archy, I think I am to be, and I am glad you are pleased," said Robert, looking down at his plate, with a full knowledge of the thoughts running through Archy's head.

After supper Archy hurried through with the cleaning up, and packed everything in the camp-chest; then he came to the tent-door and looked in for an instant as if to attract Robert's attention, which he did not succeed in doing; so he walked away and came back

from the fire in a few minutes and looked in again. Robert noticed him and asked :

“Archy, do you wish to see Captain Warren?”

“Yes, mauss, I does.”

Allen rose to walk out, but Archy, with a laugh, said :

“Not you, Mauss Al. It’s de odder cap’n I wants.”

The captains laughed heartily at this, and Robert went out, when Archy led him mysteriously to the line where the horses were picketed and pointed out Señor, who was in splendid condition.

“Mauss Robert, yeh kin have me ’long now, yeh’s an offsir—can’t yeh?”

“Why, yes, Archy, if you would like to leave Allen,” said Robert, with an affected indifference.

“If I’d like to leave Mauss Al? Why, Mauss Robert, hav’nt I worked an’ look’d for’d to this day, a-prayin’ I might be ’long wid yeh again? An’ now yeh does n’t keer!” Archy dropped his head with a dejected air as he concluded, but his whole expression changed as he felt his own hand clasped by his master’s and heard him say :

“Archy, I did not care for this commission on my own account, but I did on yours. I wanted you near me. And from this day forth only death can come to keep us apart.”

Archy returned the pressure with no gentle squeeze, and a hot drop fell on his master’s hand. He was too full to express his feelings beyond ejaculating, “Oh, praise de Lor’! praise de Lor’!”

That night as Robert lay in his tent he saw the fly opened nearly every hour and the tall form of Archy as he peered in, and he heard, as in a dream, the soft

voice pouring out the hymns that suggested home and brought up all its happier memories.

While in camp near Corinth, Colonel Jackson sent Robert an order he had received from General Buell, which was to send Captain Robert Warren and twenty such men as he might select to his (General Buell's) headquarters at once.

Robert was very anxious to secure a lieutenancy for Gaines, and have him assigned to his company; and for this reason he sought every opportunity to have that brave fellow's sterling merits known. Of course he was the first man selected, and with him the Dawns, Aleck Cameron, and Tennessee's Western friends, "Indian Nation," "Arkansas," and Long Sam. It was an easy matter to find men anxious to accompany Robert on his supposed scout, for the daring and success of his expeditions were becoming subjects for camp-fire recital.

On reporting in the evening, and a few hours after getting the order, to General Buell, Captain Robert Warren—to give him his title for once—was instructed to make a scout in the direction of Holly Springs, where it was supposed the enemy was organizing for a dash northward, and, having obtained all the information he could, to return to the army at Corinth, or to report to Colonel Philip H. Sheridan, if he found his command easier of access.

That night Robert Warren and his scouts, by a detour, got beyond the Union lines and turned south toward Holly Springs, intending to make their observations the next night. The country was thinly settled and the roads heavy and sandy, but both grew better as he got further south from the line of Tennessee.

That evening he went into camp in a piece of woods near a large cotton plantation about a half mile from the main road. A short time afterwards an elderly gentleman, attracted by the smoke, made his appearance and introduced himself, in the most affable manner, as "Dr. Miller, the proprietor of the plantation." Robert was glad to see him, and soon made arrangements for the purchase of fodder for the horses and additional food for the men. Dr. Miller was a Southern gentleman of the old school; that is, he was generous, impulsive, sensitive, and conceited, and the half hour he spent with the scouts, whose true character he of course knew nothing of, was occupied by minute details of what he would have done had the war occurred ten years before; what he might be tempted to do if the Yankees came within gun-shot of his home, for old as he was he considered himself still a match for a dozen of "the cowardly negro-stealers," as he called the Northern soldiers.

It cost nothing for Robert to tell Dr. Miller that he honored his spirit and devotion, and hoped the young men would emulate his example. Indeed this little piece of judicious flattery completely won the chivalrous old man, who began to think Robert a young fellow of judgment and sense, so he consequently extended an invitation for him to spend the evening at his house. Robert accepted with profuse thanks, and, after instructing Gaines carefully as to what should be done, he accompanied the doctor to his very comfortable home: that is, the place was comfortable for a Mississippi planter's house. It was white, and had the stereotyped disproportioned pillars before it and the wide gallery around it. The

grounds were very slovenly kept. They had been well laid out once, but the neglect and weeds spoke of aesthetical plans never fully carried out. The interior of the house was in keeping with the outside. A wide hall, without carpet or matting, that echoed the footfalls like a deserted or haunted castle. A mild smell of decay in the large, slovenly-furnished parlor, with its faded gilt paper and mock-chandeliers. Robert took a hasty inventory of the place as the servant entered with lights, and the doctor went out to order supper.

An unexpected pleasure was in store for Robert. At the supper-table he was introduced to two handsome, tall young ladies, both dressed alike, and resembling each other like two drops of water. They were the doctor's twin daughters and only children. He was a widower, and felt a just pride in his beautiful children. In truth, Robert's respect for the old gentleman went up at once, he frowning upon the doctor's wish that one of them had been a son, in order that he might fight for the South.

After supper, in answer to a query from the doctor, Robert said he hoped to meet General Bragg at Holly Springs next day, as he was to report to him the result of his scout.

"Why, my dear sir, Bragg was at Tupelo a few days since waiting for Beauregard to join him; he surely would not come over to Holly Springs at this critical time," said the doctor, with some excitement.

Robert lowered his voice, and in a confidential and mysterious tone said: "Doctor, you will hear of things that will astonish you before this week is past. I know of combinations that would make your hair rise. Some day you will know all."

The doctor appreciated Robert's confidence, for he lowered his voice and mysteriously said: "You astonish me."

"Do you know what troops are at the Springs now?" asked Robert; then, as if correcting himself for asking such a question, he added, self-reprovingly, "but of course, you do not, the men are so cautiously on the move."

"The Texas Rangers are there now. You know them, no doubt," said the doctor, nodding in the direction of Robert, who replied:

"Oh yes, very well."

"I suppose," continued the doctor, "you know that Wharton commands them now; that Terry is dead. A noble fellow Terry was."

"Yes, a brave man; but one equally daring is at the head of the gallant Eighth. Wharton is a splendid soldier," said Robert, with undisguised earnestness.

"Do you know any of the men in the Rangers?" asked the doctor, and without waiting for an answer he went on, "I have a nephew who belongs to them, a splendid young fellow, from Brazoria, named Addison, a sister's child. By the way, I expect him here about 10 o'clock."

"I would be very glad to meet any of the regiment, particularly if related to my fair friends," said Robert, bowing in the direction of the young ladies, who sat suggestively near the piano.

Robert, who really loved music, asked, as a favor, that the ladies would play, and with well-bred willingness they at once acquiesced. The captain was a soldier, so they indulged him, by way of a prelude,

with "The Bonnie Blue Flag," "Dixie," with appropriate words, and a queer, figurative song of remarkable poetic ability, called "The Southern Wagon," in which the States—South—were represented as piling into a vehicle, one after the other, unlike the original swain and his "Phyllis dear," and each stanza ended with the delightful refrain—

"Then wait for the wagon,
The dissolution wagon,
Oh! wait for the wagon,
And we 'll all take a ride."

Fortunately Robert knew the air, and, with a fitting military enthusiasm, he walked to the piano at the first martial sound, and, with his deep bass, swelled out the chorus to the great delight of the doctor, who beat time on the matting with his feet. During the singing Robert found time to look at his watch: five minutes to nine.

Suddenly he became aware that he had business at camp which would detain him a short time, and, with regrets in profusion, he stated his intention of leaving, saying at the same time that if agreeable he would return in a half hour and finish his delightful treat.

The doctor wished to accompany him, but Robert politely put him off by saying he would run to the camp and back in no time, which would be very undignified for him to do if the doctor accompanied him. The doctor laughed, and Robert verified his words by starting for the camp with a speed that seemed marvelous to the old man, and which led him as he entered the house to utter, "I could do that when I was young."

Reaching camp, Robert sought Gaines at once.

"Andy, you know Addison, of Brazoria?"

"I reckon I do," said Gaines with emphasis.

"Well, he is to visit this plantation, which his uncle owns, to-night. Send some men out on the Holly Springs road, and give them instructions to keep safely all men who belong to the Rangers. Let all bodies pass that number more than four."

"All right, captain."

"I am going back to the house. Send Archy for me at once if there is the appearance of danger, or if Addison is captured."

"I will do so," said Gaines, while Robert examined his pistols carefully, and hooked up, under his overcoat, his Shiloh sword. He returned to the house, where he met the doctor and his daughters on the gallery.

"Did you find your men all right, captain?" asked one of the young ladies.

"Yes, but men get careless, particularly about guard duty, when away from the enemy's front. They think it an unnecessary work; but it is duty, and I am determined to carry out my orders to the letter. I never let four hours of the night pass without visiting all parts of my camp," said Robert, taking off his overcoat as he entered the house, with the beautiful twins in the advance, and the doctor bringing up the rear.

"I wish all our soldiers were like you, captain," said the doctor as they resumed their seats; "we would soon wind up the war. But to tell the truth, I think they are very careless as a rule."

"You pay me an undeserved compliment, doctor; but I think I can say without vanity that I wish all

southern men were like me in principle, there would be fewer traitors in the land, and no need for conscripting, as I understand the Confederate government proposes."

"You are right, captain; the army is full of traitors, and fear only holds them in the ranks. They are ignorant as a rule and cannot appreciate their rights. Bragg shot some men a day or two since at Tupelo for some petty offense, and we all think the influence will be very good. Why, over in Alabama," said the doctor, warming with his subject, "they use bloodhounds to chase the deserters." He forgot that Mississippi had thousands of them. She was the North Carolina of the West, hated by the Confederate army for the meanness of her citizens and the uncertainty of her soldiers.

Here one of the beautiful twins ventured to say:

"I declare, captain, many of the young men near here were for staying at home, but the ladies refused to receive them. We clubbed together and wrote them round-robin letters, and sent them crinoline, and just drove them into the army."

"Yes," interrupted the other sweet angel, who played the accompaniments while her sister sang: "The ladies in Jackson, Meridian, and Mobile—indeed in all our cities and towns—have resolved, and organized for the purpose, not to see any gentlemen not dressed in grey. Personally I have determined not to marry a man who is not certain he has killed at least one vile Yankee."

The doctor smiled on his heroic daughter an approving, paternal smile, which showed the pride he felt in one capable of such denial for the sake of truth.

“Few ladies can boast of your patriotic spirit, and should the fates spare me to see you again, I promise to show you a Yankee’s scalp,” said the captain, bowing to the self-denying girl.

The twins clapped their little white hands in applause, and the doctor, with liquid approval in his eyes, smiled at the captain and the olive branches.

While the captain talked and sang with the doctor and his daughters, the pickets about the camp were vigilant. Gaines remained behind to give orders, and as Archy was the only man who knew Addison, he sent him with Tennessee out on the Holly Springs road. It was the black man’s first duty as a soldier, and every sound was listened to, and every shadow of moving branch or passing cloud watched. About ten o’clock, Tennessee, who had been listening with his ear close to the ground, rose quickly, and cocking his rifle and adjusting his belt, said, in his own cool way.

“Keerful now, ole boy, I hears three on ’em a-comin’ shuah.”

To which Archy responded: “Oh golly!” accompanying the trite remark with a low chuckle.

“Archy, pull down yer hat, so’s ter hide that ’ar face o’ yourn, an’ do the háltin’,” said Tennessee, stepping behind Archy in the middle of the road.

On came the horsemen, chatting and laughing, seen where the half-moon shone, then lost in the darkness of the forest shadows. Unaware of the vigilant pickets’ proximity, they rode close up at a brisk canter, when suddenly the horses were reined in at the sight of a giant form with leveled gun in front, who commanded them in a deep voice, “Halt thar!”

Then another huge form rose up with polished rifle-barrel in the indistinct light and pointed it at the breast of the second horseman.

“Who goes thar?” asks the deep voice.

“Friends of the Confederacy, by thunder! Who ever imagined there was a picket in this region?” responded the well-known voice of Addison.

“It’s him,” whispered Archy.

“Dismount an’ ’vance one at a time,” said Tennessee, stepping quickly beside Archy.

The first man who dismounted gave his name as Addison, and, being disarmed, he stepped to the rear. The others advanced and were disarmed in the same manner. Addison seemed indignant, and evinced a spirit to complain at his treatment, but Tennessee, who had fastened the horses to some saplings, ordered them to move ahead, intimating that he might be tempted to shoot if there was too much talk.

When near the camp-fire the prisoners were ordered to sit down, and a guard was placed over them by Gaines.

Addison was not aware of the character of his captors, and he expostulated against such treatment.

“Where are your passes?” demanded Gaines.

“We have none. Our regiment is close by, and after ‘taps’ I thought I’d run over and see my uncle, who lives close by. Come, lieutenant, there is no use in holding us for nothing.” This was said by Addison in a pleading tone, but Gaines was determined in his reply.

“I have orders to arrest any man who travels this road to-night without authority. The captain will be here presently; speak to him.”

The prisoners swore and growled at their ill luck. In the meantime Archy hurried to the house, where the captain was listening in raptures to “Beauregard’s Grand March.” On learning that his servant wished to see him, Robert excused himself and stepped out. As he did so Archy seized his arms and in a hurried whisper said: “Gosh, Mauss Robut, we 'se got 'em.”

“What, Addison?”

“Yas, Adson He did n’t know me (Called me ‘sah’ an’ ‘sargent.’ I’d like ‘d ter larf’ right out,” and Archy put his hand to his mouth to suppress the chuckle which the memory of the event excited.

Robert returned to the parlor, and, thanking the family for their courteous treatment, said he must return at once to camp, as a courier had arrived with orders that must be acted on without delay.

The doctor regretted that the captain could not stay until his nephew arrived, and the young ladies for once deemed duty to the Confederacy cruel. Bidding them good-bye, Robert returned to camp, and, after a hasty consultation between himself, Gaines, and Tennessee, it was decided to examine the prisoners separately, with a loaded pistol close to the head of each while being questioned, first informing them that their captors were Yankees. If the stories corroborated, it would prevent the necessity for a scout around the Springs. Extinguishing the fires, Robert gave the order to “saddle up,” attending to his own horse, while Archy quickly mounted and galloped back after the horses of the Texans. The prisoners, closely guarded, were placed on their own horses, and not an answer given to their wondering questions, while Robert led the advance, riding toward a swamp which

they had passed about three miles back on the road. Reaching this they rode in some distance, and the order was given to dismount. The ground was miry and wet. The moon had gone down, and the black ash and tamarack trees, with their drooping branches, gave an air of gloom to the place, which was intensified by the occasional "hoot, hoot" of an owl and the croaking of countless frogs.

"It is, perhaps, unnecessary to tell you," said Robert, advancing to the prisoners, and speaking in a firm tone, "that you are prisoners in the hands of Union scouts. Should we be captured in this service we would expect no mercy from the rebels, and consequently we feel inclined to return none. Your only chance for escape is to answer truthfully such questions as I may put to you. I will examine you separately, and if the stories do not agree I will send you farther into this swamp, and no man will ever know your fate. Walk this way, sir." Robert motioned to the prisoner nearest to him, who immediately obeyed the order.

Walking back some distance the prisoner said: "I'm willin' ter tell all I knows, an' that ain't much," whereupon he gave his regiment and brigade, with the names of the organizations at the Springs and by whom commanded.

After learning all he could in this way, Robert said:

"You say John Wharton is your colonel?"

"That's what I meant to say," replied the prisoner.

"Where is Colonel Wharton now?" asked Robert.

"Wall, cap'n, I do n't like to say," said the prisoner, in a hesitating tone.

"You must be the judge of your own answers," said

Robert, sternly. "Here, Aleck Cameron, bring me the halter from this man's horse.

"Stop, cap'n, ye've got the dead wood on me this time. I'll tell yeh all about it;" and the prisoner's voice grew tremulous.

"Well, where is John Wharton?"

"Why, he an' Major Harrison is back on the next plantation to the doctor's. The regiment's close by."

"How far from there is the regiment?" asked Robert.

"Not mor'n a mile. Fact is, we 's a-goin' on a raid inside the Yankee lines to-morrow, and the regiment was pushed out to-night so 's to give us a good start in the mornin'."

The other prisoner was brought up, and his statements agreed in every particular with those of the first.

Addison was then taken aside, when Robert made the same demand,

"I cannot be forced to give information that will damage the cause of my country, and if you are the brave man you ought to be to command such an undertaking, you will do me no wrong for standing by my principles," said Addison.

"Might I ask what your principles are?"

"You can, sir! My principles as a soldier are the interests of the Confederacy," replied Addison.

"Yes, and to promote the interests of the Confederacy, you, who now ask life at my hands, would sanction the imprisonment of an aged man; you would hold him till death came in mercy to take him from your cruel grasp; you would forget every feeling of boasted love for that old man's daughter and vaunted

affection for that old man's son in the hour of their great trouble, and crush them to the earth." Robert was going on, his tone becoming more excited, but the prisoner stopped him, exclaiming in great agitation :

"Gracious Heaven, who are you?"

"I am Robert Warren, of Gonzelletta. If you doubt me, I can place your finger in the bullet-mark of your cowardly assassins. Yes, Mr. Addison, I can show you the fragments of the flag which you tore down from the court-house at Brazoria, and which I am bearing back. I have a hundred burning evidences in my heart of such as you and your principles. Let me hear no more of them from you—I might be tempted to degrade myself with your blood."

"For God's sake, shoot me, Robert Warren, but do not talk in that strain. Many things in the past I would change, but as God is my judge I was influenced by honest motives. I regret your father's death, and the loss of your property, but it was not my fault."

"What, my property gone? Why, this is a fresh blow. I suppose my mother and sister are homeless, and all that your principles may triumph." Robert walked away, for he was too much excited to speak longer with the prisoner. He had learned before of the southern confiscation act, and this intelligence but confirmed his fears.

This was no time to think of self. Wharton was near by, with but few men near him. To capture or kill him would be to render the country a signal service. He certainly had papers of value on his person. Robert determined to enter the lion's den.

"Aleck Cameron, you, Ned, Dawn, and Archy must

stay back here and keep good watch over the prisoners; I will return inside of three hours. Light no fires and if the prisoners attempt to escape shoot them down at once."

"Hoot, captain, they're nae sa daft as to tempt this chiel wie 'scapin'. Ye'll fine us as safe as Ailsie Craig gin ye come back," said Aleck, as he made fast his horse and took off the bridle.

Giving Aleck a few whispered instructions as to what he should do in case they did not return, Robert with the remainder of his men mounted and retraced their steps toward the doctor's plantation. Riding past it about a mile, they discovered, back from the road about two hundred yards, a large house, which Robert judged rightly was the place where Colonel Wharton was billeted for the night. Turning into a lane some distance before reaching the house, he dismounted the men, and ordering them to stand by their horses, he and Gaines walked cautiously back to the end of the lane, which terminated in an inclosure surrounded by those adjuncts to every southern plantation, viz., negro quarters. They aroused the occupants of the nearest hut without any alarm, for a negro soon made his appearance at the door, and asked what the gentlemen wanted.

"Uncle, can you tell me who lives here?" asked Robert of the black man, who, half awake, was endeavoring to fasten his braces.

"Mauss King libs heah, sah," said the black man, giving his pants an adjusting hitch.

"Are there any strangers in the house to-night, uncle?"

"Strangers!" ejaculated the negro, "'Fore heaben,

mausser, dar's nothin' else. Over dar, 'bout de galry, reckon dar's mor'n a hunderd. Com'd from Texas."

"Do you know the names of any of them?" asked Robert.

"'Deed I does n't, mausser, but my ole woman knows—she cooks up at de house."

"Do n't make a noise, but tell her I want to see her," said Robert, who became a little alarmed at the barking of a half dozen curs, such as are always to be found around negro quarters.

"Hush these dogs, uncle, quick. Here's five dollars. That's right. This is your wife?" said Robert as a stout-looking negro woman came to the door.

"Why, bress de Lor, who is yeh 't any rate?" said the woman in surprise.

"Hush, aunty—don't be frightened—I am a Yankee."

"You's a Yankee? 'Clar to heaben, yeh skeer me," said the black woman in a tone that showed she was certainly astonished.

"Yes, aunty, and in a short time we are coming to set you all free. Now tell me, are there any soldiers over at the house?"

The woman seemed to be convinced of Robert's character by his earnest, hurried tone, and lowering her voice into a whisper, she puffed out as if the suppression of her natural tones gave her shortness of breath:

"Dar's right smart sojers ober dar, shuah," pointing to the house. "Fust two com'd; one mauss called kernul an de udder boss, or caupling, or like dat. Den arter supper mor'n fifty com'd, and fas'en'd dar hosses in de yar'. Dey's a sleepin' on de galry. I knows

dar 's a heap on 'em, kase I cooked for 'em, an' O Lor' ! but dey was hungry. Jest kep' us a totin' coffee an' bacon an' dodgers till I thought dey neber would stop."

"That is all right, aunty—here is some money for you. Now tell me where I can find the horses—and you, uncle, come with me. But, stop," said Robert, as if a new thought struck him, "aunty, do you know where the man they called 'colonel' sleeps, and where his saddle and saddle-bags are?"

"Yas, I does, mauss, but if yer a Yank keep clar. I tell yeh dey 've heaps o' guns."

"I know, aunty, but I am fighting for the colored people and the Union, and the colored people should help me. There are too many men over there for me to attack, but I must have the colonel's saddle and saddle-bags, even if I get shot trying. Now some of your people know where they are. I will give one hundred dollars for them."

"I reckon Steve kin git 'em. Bob, call Steve," said the black woman, addressing her husband.

The man left and returned in a few minutes with a black boy, to whom Robert expressed his wishes. Steve announced his willingness to get the desired articles, for the temptation was very great in a monetary point of view. Entering the cabin and closing the door, Robert asked the man to rake up the coals; then taking a blank book from his pocket he wrote :

"COLONEL WHARTON: To-night I came close enough to have shot you, but it would have been very mean to change your mode of sleeping. I will borrow your horse and equipments, and when you come for them I promise you a warm reception. Indeed, if you had not been in such good company I

would have insisted on taking you with me to-night.
I can only make this clear by signing myself,

“Hastily yours, ROBERT WARREN,
 “*Captain U. S. Vols.*”

“Steve, are Wharton’s saddle-bags in his room?”

“No, mauss; dey’s in de hall,” said Steve.

“Very well. Who takes him coffee in the morning?”

“Bet does, sah.”

“Now, Steve, give this to Bet, with this five-dollar bill, and tell her to leave the note on Wharton’s dressing stand.”

“I will, sah, shuah,” said Steve.

“Now be quick, and bring me the saddle and saddle-bags. Make two trips. Lay them at the door if I am not here when you come back. And, Steve, bring the colonel’s sword if you can. I will pay extra for that.” Steve agreed to this; indeed he felt in the humor for stealing, and appeared to appreciate the whole affair.

While Steve went to the house, Robert sent the man for Wharton’s horse, and he and Gaines made quick work cutting the halters of the animals fastened around the yard, and rendering useless the saddles that were straddled about on the fence.

They got back and found Wharton’s horse saddled at the door.

“Now, Gaines, get back and mount yourself and the men.”

Gaines hurried back with a soft, quick step, and Robert adjusted the saddle and strapped to the pommel the colonel’s sword. Assuring himself that all the equipments were right, he vaulted into the saddle and started down the lane. He had to pass nearer to

the house than the cabins were, and the horse seemed opposed to leaving his companions, for he gave a neigh when near the house that sounded like a locomotive whistle. The noise awoke some of the Rangers, for one jumped up and shouted :

“Who goes thar?”

“Friends,” came the answer in a strong voice, as Robert walked his horse down the lane.

“What’s yer name?” asked the Ranger.

“Addison,” said the rider.

“Come back, lieutenant. The colonel sent for yeh. He’s mad as blazes. Come back.”

Still the horseman kept on, and the neighing of his horse was answered by the sympathetic neighing of the horses of the scouts.

“By hell, boys, that ain’t Addison. Yanks! Yanks! Yanks!” rang from a score of voices, and the Rangers sprang for their arms, and fired at random in the direction of the scouts.

“Get your horses,” shouted Wharton from an upper window. “Quick, men!” Lights flashed through the house, shouts and orders rang out in wild confusion, which was increased by the galloping of the loosened and now stampeded animals.

They were too late. Back toward the swamp the scouts galloped, Don keeping close to Robert’s fresh horse, his fine ears laid back as at times he jealously snapped at Wharton’s charger.

Little Ned was on the road near the place where the prisoners were concealed, and prevented the scouts riding past in the darkness.

“Rest your horses here a few minutes, men,” said Robert. as he dismounted and hurried into the swamp.

"Saddle up here. Come, prisoners, mount." In ten minutes all were again on the road, the prisoners closely guarded, and the sound of the pursuing horsemen coming up the road.

"I say, Cap.," said Tennessee, riding close to Robert when they were again on the road, "we could lick thunder out of them fellers wat's chasin' us, if ye'd only give us a chance. Dogon'd if I ain't half spilin' fur a fight."

"I should like to give them a brush, Tennessee, but we must run no risks. Some other time we can afford to stand."

Tennessee acquiesced, though he muttered at times, as he restrained Wharton's horse, on which he was now mounted, "Dogon'd if I ain't jest shuah we could rile them fellers awful."

Gradually the sounds of the Rangers behind were lost, and till daylight the scouts kept on, when they were well beyond the danger of immediate pursuit. They halted near a small plantation, where they had the horses fed and procured a breakfast for the men.

The prisoners were not well mounted, and Robert deemed it imprudent to attempt taking them through. When he was again ready to start, he called them together, and, addressing Addison, he told him he would let him and his companions return with their animals. He would not impose a parole he did not expect them to keep, so he would not be astonished to meet them in arms soon again.

Addison was depressed and gloomy, and in parting said: "Robert Warren, you will find some day I am not so bad as you think."

Then the scouts turned north, and with their jaded animals the Texans rode slowly south.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DISASTERS.

The spring of '62 was most disastrous to the Confederates, and many of the southern people felt the war was nearing an end. On the eastern coast the Federal troops were successful. In Virginia, under an idolized general the grandest army ever seen on the American continent, confident of victory, was marching upon Richmond. In Kentucky and Tennessee the Confederates lost ground in every battle, and beyond the Mississippi the hordes of Price and Van Dorn were driven into Arkansas and beaten to pieces on their chosen battle grounds. Already the shouts of victory rang through the North, and the advocates of Union exulted in the approaching close of the war. How wonderfully all changed. One week in June saw the boasted Army of the Potomac a broken, disorganized mob, fleeing from an attack on the Confederate capital to the defense of its own. The same time saw Price's late army pushing triumphantly into Missouri, with a rabble fleeing before it; while the lately-routed Bragg, at the head of seventy thousand men, ignoring Grant at Corinth and Iuka, pushed boldly into Kentucky, boasting that he would not rest till his horses watered in the broad Ohio—and he made that boast good. In vain, on nearly parallel roads, did Buell struggle on to head

him off. Kentucky, with her rich harvests, her splendid stock, and abundance of men, courted the rebel approach, and welcomed the invasion with shouts of joy and an open hospitality. The clouds hung black over the land in that terrible summer of '62.

Warren with his scouts accompanied Buell's army north, though all had lost that fire which rendered no labor tiresome as they pushed south. By September the Union Army under Buell was back in Kentucky. There they found Kirby Smith and John Morgan riding rough-shod through the State, and the stronghold of Cumberland Gap given up to the foe. Small garrisons of Union troops were left unprotected through the State, and one by one they surrendered to the enemy. That was a fearful race between Buell and Bragg. The dust from the hostile columns could be seen daily, and at night the camp-fires were visible from each line. Day by day the race continued. The Union troops begged to be led against the rebels, but, for reasons best known to himself, Buell avoided the possibility of battle. Discontent and disappointment pervaded the Union ranks. The men cursed the commanding general openly, and stories were circulated that Buell and Bragg were brothers-in-law, and that they often met between the lines and slept together. Of course there was no truth in this, but it served to show the feeling of distrust and spirit of disaffection among the men, and the reasons they found to account for Buell's apparent indifference.

There was a feeling of relief, not only in the Union Army, but throughout the nation, when Buell entered Louisville, though pursued by Bragg's cavalry. The Kentuckians who sided with the South were not un-

selfish in their devotion to the Confederacy, and they shrank from the terms of Bragg's proclamation, which called on the young men of the State to join his army in order to avoid conscription. At the same time he made Confederate money a legal tender for all purchases, and confiscated with barbarous injustice the movable property of all Union men. The rebel citizens of Kentucky were only reconciled to this state of affairs by the belief that the Confederate troops were a fixture for the war, and that they had seen the last of the Yankees. Indeed, so confident were they of the permanency of southern rule that they determined to inaugurate a governor of Bragg's naming, and a neat old man named Haws was found willing to accept the position.

At this time Lincoln's call for more men went through the land, and, like the call of Roderick Dhu, it was answered as if the earth teemed with men, and Louisville speedily became a grand camp, into which poured the noblest men of the Northwest. Buell was preparing to turn south again and face the rebels with his increased and rested army. A few days before the advance, Captain Kelton sent Robert a letter which he informed him had been found in Wharton's saddle-bags, and, as it alluded to Warren, the captain doubted not it would be of interest.

Robert hastened to his quarters the moment he received the letter, and turning to the superscription, he read the name of "William Wallace Gasting, Confederate States Receiver." He dreaded to begin the letter, for he felt it contained another blow; but it had to come some time, so he read:

“BRAZORIA, *April 1, 1862.*

“HON. JNO. WHARTON, *Col. Eighth Texas Cavalry,*
(*Gen. A. Sidney Johnston's Army :*)

“MY DEAR SIR : You will, I am sure, pardon me for troubling you at this time, and attribute this intrusion to my desire to keep you posted on public matters in this State, which you are destined to govern, as I feel confident you will be elected as soon as you return. It would certainly cheer your hours of trial and danger did you but hear the unrestrained and well-deserved praise lavished on you by all the people.

“It is pleasant to know that the disaffection which at one time threatened the integrity of “the Lone Star State” has been effectually crushed out, and a healthier patriotic feeling pervades all classes.

“You no doubt remember the Warrens, of Gonzelleta? The course of this unfortunate family has given us no small degree of trouble. After the death of Robert Warren, senior, it was my principal duty to sell his property, which was purchased by your ardent admirer, the elder Mr. Townsend.

“Miss Mary Warren foolishly started from here, to find her brother, last fall. By the way, I am given to understand that he escaped drowning. Let us hope he is to meet with a more deserved and more ignoble fate. Miss Warren was captured in Tennessee, through the vigilance of young Townsend, who happened to be at Nashville as she attempted to pass through. This young woman was imprisoned, and a search disclosed letters on her person of great importance to the Confederacy. One of these letters, written by Mrs. Boardman, was forwarded to me. It showed clearly her character and sympathy with the Yankees. Act-

ing on the evidence therein contained, it became my duty to seize and sell her place, which was purchased by that excellent gentleman and mutual friend of ours, Mr. Church, of Matagorda. It is said that Mrs. Boardman and her family have gone north. Certain it is, they have added to the harmony of the community by leaving here.

“These measures seem harsh, but they have enabled us non-combatants to eradicate every disloyal element in our midst. I maintain there is more to dread from internal discord than outside strife.

“We all learned with pain of the loss of the gallant Terry, but rejoice that one so brave as Wharton succeeds him. My wife has your name ever on her lips, and has written a poem in your praise, which she begs me to inclose. We are daily praying that God may specially guard you and speedily return you victories. An honor will be conferred if at any time you deign to drop a line to,

“Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“WILLIAM WALLACE GASTING,

“*Confederate States Receiver.*”

Robert read this letter over hastily with a throbbing heart, then slowly, as if he had misunderstood it, and doubted the evidence of his own senses. Gradually he saw the whole terrible truth, and, crushed 'neath the blow, he dropped his head in his hands and groaned in very agony. While he sat, bowed, he became conscious of another presence in the room, and, lifting up his ashy face, he saw Archy looking down on him with an expression of sorrow and pity.

“Wat's wrong, Mauss Robut? Nothin' I kin do fur yeh?”

"Nothing, nothing, Archy. Gracious Heaven, I feel as if my heart would break!"

Then he read and explained Gasting's letter to Archy.

"De Lor 'll watch ober all, Mauss Robut. Poor Susey an' de pickaninnies! I s'pose ole Townsend's got dem too. Don't trubble, do n't trubble, poor mauss." And as Archy spoke he staggered to a seat, and sobbed like a child as he repeated, "Please do n't trubble, Mauss Robut. De Lor' will watch ober all. Poor Susey an' de pickaninnies! O Lor', what 'll dey do now? Dat 's what 'noys me."

For several minutes both men sat, struck down with grief. Robert was the first to recover.

"There, Archy, my poor boy, look up. It is not right for us to give way in this manner. That's right, don't cry any more. Go for Gaines. Poor fellow, they don't mention his wife, but I suppose she is a sufferer too."

Archy rose, uttering between his sobs words of consolation to Robert, his fears for Susey and the little ones, and his confidence that the Lord would see everything made right.

Gaines, learning that Robert wanted him, and reading trouble in Archy's face, hurried at once to his captain's quarters. He read Gasting's letter, and heard Robert's comments; then he said slowly, without raising his eyes from the ground:

"Robert, the night we left Brazoria I made up my mind that home, life, and what is still dearer to me, my wife and little one, with my old mother, were to be given up. To hear of the loss of any of these, excepting of course the improbability of hearing of my

own death, would pain, but it would not surprise me. I was not, and am not now so sanguine as you, but I have a duty to perform, and, come what may, I will press on to the end, whether we are successful or not."

"God bless you, old friend! I feel as you do, but this blow came so suddenly that for the time it unmanned me. Henceforth, I promise you that no calamity will deter me."

Robert seized Gaines's hand as he spoke, and the friends knew each other better.

October 3 was the day set apart for the inauguration of Governor Haws, Bragg's selection for governor. At Frankfort, Bragg and Buckner, Morgan and Smith, Cheatham and Heath, with their staffs and body guards, were present. Kentucky's bravest sons and fairest daughters had assembled to prepare a banquet befitting the splendid occasion of the inauguration. Triumphal arches, portals wreathed, and streets crossed with barred flags gave a festive appearance to the flat, secluded streets of Kentucky's capital. On the hills that overshadow the little town artillery was stationed to thunder out a salute to the State-rights governor the moment he became invested with power. Bouquets were prepared at the State House and hotels, and private residences were thrown open to the victorious southern soldiers. Frankfort was full of life, flowers, and gay uniforms. Music and incense intoxicated the vast assemblage like the host that gathered at the board of the Babylonian king, and everything denoted permanency to the new governor and his cause.

The Union troops were advancing, and on October the 2d Captain Robert Warren received an order to march in the direction of Frankfort, distant thirty

miles, and feel or ascertain the enemy's force. They advanced that evening within six miles of Frankfort, and were astonished at finding no vedettes nor outposts of any kind. The captain wisely went into camp for the night, sending old Dawn, Aleck Cameron, and Tennessee into the town to ascertain the state of affairs. It is not a difficult job for a good scout to pass lines that are well guarded; it was particularly easy for the three men to enter the unpicketed town. About midnight the scout returned, reporting the town in charge of a small provost guard, while the most ample preparations were being made by the citizens for the reception of the Confederate generals and the inauguration of the governor.

Tennessee went into raptures over the grand feed that was being prepared in town.

"Why, Cap., Archy ain't no whar. He can't begin to get up a shadder like the grub I saw. By the ghost of old Andrew, Cap., if we 'uns could get in thar it 'ed be the healthiest joke. Would n't we make the provender fly! Wall, now, I reckon not," and Tennessee smacked his lips and laughed with boyish delight at the idea he had suggested, but which had already been matured in the mind of the captain.

Robert smiled, for even the quiet Aleck Cameron was excited, and the old light came back to his sad eyes as he looked around on his devoted men, and felt that his sufferings would not go unavenged.

Archy, who had overheard Tennessee's criticism on his cooking, felt a little nettled at the bare suggestion of being excelled, even by the people of Frankfort, and he showed it by saying:

"Mauss Robut, dis chile ain't agwine to sleep any

more dis blessed night. An' if Mauss Tennessee ain't jest a foolin' bout dem tings in Frankfort, why I reckon no one won't want no breakfus' in de mornin'."

Archy had them, in his own opinion, and the captain said:

"Oh, Archy, I must have a cup of coffee, at any rate. You see, we are not certain about that big dinner. We are not expected, and after looking at the place I might be inclined to think it wrong to disturb the people."

"Gosh, dat 's so. It might n't be healthy like, but if it 's only healthy to go thar, oh, Susey! it 'ed jes' be nice."

Tennessee took a heavy chew of tobacco, and intimated that it would be safe to bet a man's bottom dollar on the niceness of the affair, quoting Archy in conclusion, "If it 's only healthy. That 'ar 's the pint in my mind."

Before day the scouts were in the saddle, and by sunrise they had crossed to the Lawrenceburg pike. When within three miles of the city they came upon a drunken Confederate soldier lying in a fence corner. One of the men dismounted and shook him up.

"Hallo! relief come, eh? Damn glad; got so tired waitin'." Here the soldier showed a disposition to get down on his hands and knees and search for something. He was stopped in his efforts, when, with a groan of sorrow, he said:

"Sure 's hell, some skunk 's stole that ar' canteen. Whoever the onory cuss was, he jes' went through some of the bes' Bourbon. Bully for sight; jes' can't see a Yank with that stuff inside. 'Rah for Mawgin."

"Wake up, ole fel, an' salute yer nat'ral-born

frien's," said Tennessee, shaking the drunken man, who showed symptoms in his lower limbs of collapsing.

The Confederate rubbed his eyes as if awaking from a sleep, and, spreading out his legs to support himself, he seized a rail to make his position more secure, and, evidently sobered, he drew a long breath, and with a sudden explosion he said :

"I swar to Heaven, I believe I'm bagged."

"For a man that ain't descended from the prophets you have made a most truthful surmise," said Aleck Cameron in his broad Scotch accent, while his gray eyes were glancing around for the missing canteen.

"What regiment do you belong to?" asked the captain.

"Scott's Cavalry, a-fightin' for the sunny South, by thunder!" said the prisoner, with a somewhat defiant and surly tone.

"Where is your command?"

"Dunno," replied the prisoner; "but I reckon they're out Yank huntin'. The boys is spilin' for a fight."

Some of the men laughed at this remark, when the prisoner added :

"Wall, if you Yanks don't b'lieve I'm tellin' the truth, jes' hunt up Scott's Cavalry an' ask 'em."

There was nothing to be made out of this fellow, so Warren pushed still closer to Frankfort. The forenoon was occupied in examining carefully the valley in which the town of Frankfort is situated. Strange as it may seem, there was not a soldier in sight, and nearly all the white people had crowded into the town. On the hill overlooking the town, west from the Louisville pike, the scouts were drawn up in

full view of the crowds below. Their advent evidently created alarm, for up the opposite hill, in the direction of Lexington, carriages and mounted men were seen to pour in wild haste. They evidently considered the cavalry the advance of the Union Army. A few pieces of artillery, intended to fire salutes, began to fire in the direction of the scouts, and this in an instant decided Captain Warren. Sending Gaines down the hill, with directions to charge into the town, in the direction of the court-house, the captain with the remainder of the men rode into the valley from the right, and crossing the bridge a minute after Gaines, the bugle sounded the charge, and the colors were unfurled. Down through the streets, past crowds of pale, frightened people, and by houses decked with flowers, and under canopies of rebel flags the Union cavalry dashed. There was a short resistance near the State House, but the rebels showed no disposition to fight in the crowded town. Almost as quickly as it takes to tell it, the streets were deserted save by the scouts and a few drunken soldiers, who could not join in the retreat. The captain did not like to show his full force by pursuing. He had not been in town ten minutes before the old flag floated from the State House; and over many of the buildings that a short time before floated the stars and bars the Stars and Stripes were waving. So quickly men change. There was feasting in Frankfort that day, and in many hearts besides those of Warren and his men there was rejoicing, too. Though the smiles of misled beauty did not beam on the banquet board, their absence did not detract from the relish with which the governor's dinner was eaten.

There were laughter and jest at the table and loud praise of the immortal cooks. Archy was ordered to hide his diminished head forever, which he proceeded to do in a huge veal pie. Tennessee and his brother, little Ned, who was always near him, ate with astonishing relish and energy.

"Boys," said the former, with his mouth filled with roast beef and jelly, "lay in enough for the campaign, for if yeh do n't eat enough now, mark my words you'll all be sorry bimeby."

This prudent advice was not needed, though the men, at the captain's request, abstained from the liquors, which they found in abundance. This was a piece of self-denial which only an old soldier can appreciate.

That afternoon, with wreaths around their horses' necks and a score of rebel flags trailing behind them, the scouts fell back to the hill and left Frankfort to ponder over its short-lived glory.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TRIALS OF THE CAMPAIGN.

The day after the flight of the Confederate governor from Frankfort, the town was occupied by a brigade of Union infantry, and Captain Robert Warren received orders to report to General Jackson, who was advancing from the direction of Bardstown.

The weather was intensely hot, and the roads ankle deep with light limestone dust, which the slightest agitation raised into stifling clouds, that covered men and horses, and in many cases obstructed the vision beyond the rank in front. To add to the difficulty of moving troops in Kentucky at this time, the long-continued drought had dried up the springs, and the streams, usually so abundant in that State, presented dry beds, with here and there a stagnant pool of green, animated water. This campaign tried to the utmost the powers of endurance of the old troops, and it was particularly hard on the recruits who joined Buell at Louisville. Many of those men had not been six days in the service when the pursuit of Bragg began. It is safe to say that the men who entered the Army in '62 were, as a class, the best men, physically, of the war, but, like all green soldiers, they began the campaign with knapsacks filled like a peddler's pack, and with as useless a variety of articles. Clothing, toilet articles, stationery, books, photographic albums,

and, in some cases, pillows and umbrellas, constituted the outfit of men who afterward felt equipped with a blanket, a coffee cup, and a section of shelter tent. Add to the great load of these personal effects the arms, ammunition, and equipments necessary for a soldier, and the unmilitary reader will have some idea of the loads carried by the majority of the " '62" recruits. Ten pounds carried in one position all day, under a hot sun, becomes very heavy toward night. Sixty pounds becomes a very incubus, and he must be a determined fellow who enters camp after his first march of twenty-five miles with as big a load as he had when he started. It takes time to acquire the knack of marching in an Army shoe—the most comfortable foot-covering in the world, by the way, for a long tramp. The recruits had not this knack, so their feet blistered, their agony became intense, their efforts to keep up failed, and their initiation in war was terrible; indeed, more so than the first thunder of opposing cannon, for men thought only about fighting before leaving home, never about long marches without water or food, and a sleep in the open air. It was curious to notice the articles that strewed the road along the line of march. At first, extra boots, blankets, books, albums with the valued pictures removed; sometimes whole knapsacks cast aside in disgust, and shoes thrown off from blistered feet; sometimes, but rarely, cartridge-boxes and body-belts could be found on the line of march, and the articles dropped could be accepted as a fair criterion of the degree of fatigue of the owner.

East of Bardstown, Captain Warren reported to General Jackson, who, with his green troops, was on

the extreme left of the Union advance. Here he met his cousin, Allen, now a major on the general's staff. They had been parted for some months, and they had an abundance of news to exchange. Russell was acting then as an aid to General Polk, whose army was reported to be at Harrodsburg. General Bragg, Allen learned, had taken the best stock off his father's plantation, despite the old gentleman's protestations and his plea that he had a son in the Southern army. The secessionists of Kentucky were very much troubled over Bragg's retreat, for they began to learn the motives that brought him into the State, viz., forage, clothing, and recruits, but their greatest dread was the retaliation they expected from the Union Army. Robert regretted to find that his cousin entertained the same opinion of General Buell as that held by the men in the ranks.

"There is nothing more certain," said the major, "than that it is now in our power, with one hundred thousand well-armed men in this army, to prevent the retreat of the enemy, and to completely destroy him; but I am satisfied that this campaign will be a miserable failure."

"I am sorry to hear you talk so, for men have no heart in a work that they are led to believe will not be successful," said Robert.

"You misunderstand me, cousin. Our officers hardly speak their fears to their most intimate friends, yet you can absolutely feel the spirit of dissatisfaction when among the men," said Allen, earnestly. Then, after a pause, he continued: "It is about time this war was conducted without gloves. I must acknowledge that the tendency of our commanding

officer to conciliate the rebels who are armed against us sickens one. While Bragg and Morgan are stealing, or rather openly taking everything that may be of use to them from Union men, our troops are half the time guarding rebel property, and during this campaign our boys have suffered for water while their comrades were guarding wells within sight on rebel plantations."

"Allen, I can appreciate your feelings in this matter," said Robert. "I remember when we were in Tennessee last spring, the general issued an order against burning fence-rails. Though I never could blame troops if, after a fatiguing march, they preferred dry rails to green wood for their camp-fires. Of course the order was a dead letter, and the general modified it by one of the most absurd amendments—*he permitted the men to burn the top rails only*. Of course there was always a top rail, and while the order was cheerfully obeyed, the fences, as you know, on the line of march were more thoroughly destroyed than before any order had been issued. Some lawyer on the general's staff pointed out the weak parts in the top-rail order, and it was altered in a way that made even the most stupid of the men chuckle with delight."

"Oh, yes! I remember that last order," said Allen, "it was that the troops should only burn those rails they found broken on the ground. Why, we used to break rails for the Seventh Pennsylvania Cavalry, and they kindly did the same thing for us. We did n't suffer for broken rails found on the ground. Why, the men interpreted that order so fine, after a while, that one man would do the breaking while

another carried the fragments away. If the whole affair was not an evidence of our weakness, it would be extremely laughable.

During the two following days McCook's corps, under a scorching sun, was moved rapidly in the direction of the enemy, who had his main rendezvous at Camp Breckinridge, on Dick River. This was the same place as the Union "Camp Dick Robinson," a few miles northeast of Danville. On the evening of the 7th, Jackson's division reached Maxville, a little town about ten miles from Harrodsburg, and on the direct road to that place.

During the day there had been a good deal of skirmishing between the cavalry on both sides, and Robert, who had been all day in the advance of the division, felt that the enemy would make a stand on the following morning.

General Polk's army, it was ascertained, held Perryville and the line of hills to the east and north, which covered the water in Chaplin Creek. McCook did not anticipate a severe fight, but with a great deal of caution he formed his men on the irregular, broken hills, west of the rebel position. During the night Jackson closed up, with Rousseau on his right, and beyond him came the splendid divisions of Mitchell and Sheridan, stretching away for four miles toward the miserable little village of Perryville.

Two hours before day the moon was shining with a wonderful brilliancy on the dry hills and shimmering on the stagnant pools in the creek, on which the Union troops gazed with longing eyes.

Despite the fact that the slopes were covered with timber, the movements of the advanced troops

either side could be distinctly seen—the arms of the watchful pickets gleaming, and the long rows of steel flashing as the regiments went into position.

In the Union Army there were fifteen thousand men who had never been under fire, and now, after their fearful march, they stood face to face with the foe, waiting with thrilling hearts and pale faces for the battle to begin. What moments of anguish and trial those preparations for battle are to old soldiers in broad daylight! How terribly they try fresh troops in the early hours, before the sun has risen, when every ravine reminds them of the valley of death, and mingling thoughts of distant homes and present dangers unstring the strongest nerves, and for the time unman the bravest soldiers. It was the first time the Eighty-fifth Illinois was ever in battle, yet one hour before day they advanced on the skirmish line close up to the enemy. Down the Chaplin valley and up the opposite hill, now lost in the black shadows, and again out in the full light of the moon they marched. Suddenly, as if a volcano had opened at their feet, the rebel artillery belched into their line, and a brigade rose from the shadows and poured a murderous volley into the regiment, which still pushed on. Not, however, as before, with regular step at skirmish intervals, but closing up and with springing bounds and ringing cheers that echoed down the dry valley, and were caught up by Jackson's untried men. The Eighty-fifth with leveled bayonets struck the enemy and drove him in confusion from his position. Under the protection of Barnett's battery the heroic Illinoisans held their position, though the enemy made several desperate efforts to recover the lost ground before daylight.

In the meantime the enemy's right was extended opposite to Jackson's division, and the booming of artillery and the unsteady rattle and roll of musketry became general along the line. About 7 a. m. General Gay, Buell's chief of cavalry, who had come upon the ground, ordered Robert Warren's company to Rousseau's right, where the Second Missouri, Second Michigan, and Ninth Pennsylvania cavalry regiments were advanced dismounted. Colonel Campbell, of Michigan, was ordered to charge and check the enemy, who had crossed the Chaplin and were pushing back Mitchell's left. The cavalry attacked with a wonderful *elan*, but before the heavy masses of the enemy they were hurled back. To the rear of the cavalry Hotchkiss, of Minnesota, quickly unlimbered his guns and checked the rebel onset. Then the leveled carbines began their work; and Pat Colburn's crack division halted, became confused, turned, and then in the wildest confusion ran back, pursued by the cavalry up the hill, who captured them by scores on the very line of battle from which they had so confidently advanced. By 10 a. m. the fire slackened along the line, and the enemy appeared to be receiving re-enforcements. The sun shone down with a hot, coppery glare on the thirsting lines and parched earth, and with longing eyes from opposite hills the rebels and Yankees gazed down on the coveted water, some of the pools already filled with the dead and dying, who had dragged themselves there to cool their parched lips. Sheridan, posted on a commanding hill, received the next attack, Loomis and Simon-ton with their veteran batteries in his front. The hill seemed one pyramid of smoke and flame as the

rebels came, and the dry earth seemed turned to clouds of dust, which enveloped Sheridan and Hardee in the terrible struggle. The rebel batteries worked with awful effect upon Sheridan's lines, and for one-half hour it was difficult to distinguish the contending lines. Mitchell and Gilbert closed in the reserve, and down in the valley about the stagnant pools the battle was waged, friend and foe stooping to drink at the same moment, then leaping together to the encounter. Such a struggle could not last long. It was beyond the power of human endurance, and after one-half hour the panting divisions disentangled, and Sheridan slowly fell back to his hill of fire, while Hardee withdrew his bleeding column. In the meantime the thunder of battle from the left drowned all other sounds, and down the line came the rumor that Jackson was being overpowered. Robert Warren was recalled to the left, and on reaching there he learned from Allen, who was wounded in the arm, that the gallant Jackson was dead. The rebels had gradually contracted their line, abandoning the village of Perryville, and massed in overpowering numbers on Jackson's front. This they could more easily do as their front was densely wooded. Before this the new troops in Jackson's division had fought with a valor that would have shed glory on the veterans of Donelson, Pea Ridge, and Shiloh, who fought there. Now came the hour of their greatest trial. With fiendish yells, that curdled the blood in the heart of the bravest, the rebels under General Buckner rushed down upon Jackson's weakened line. The cool head and brave heart of the nobler leader were forever gone. Though in that hour of trial Jackson was sorely needed, yet

the men never flinched. The Tenth Wisconsin, though reduced in this their first battle nearly one-half, took the brunt of the charge, and was literally crumbled to pieces in the repeated onsets. Stone, of Kentucky, and Parsons and Harris worked their batteries as men never worked before, but all in vain; the rebels still gained ground. Terrell and Webster soon followed Jackson; Parsons was captured, the One Hundred and Fifth Ohio, Twenty-first Wisconsin, and Eightieth Illinois were doubled up and hurled back before the mad onset of Buckner. The rebel Kentuckians were fighting, and on that part of the line three thousand loyal Kentuckians opposed them. Allen Warren did not leave the field, though he carried his arm in a sling. As the rebel charge swept round the extreme left, he was on that part of the line with his cousin's command, all dismounted. Captain Warren had lost nearly half his men. Tennessee was wounded, and Aleck Cameron, the brave, shrewd Scotch boy, was dead; Gaines was seen to fall in the midst of the enemy, and only a few of the old scouts remained. Fifty men were gathered on the left, but they were heroes, and they dashed down the declivity near Frazer's barn and met the enemy. In the advance, brandishing his sword, came Russell Warren. His hat was off and his long hair was swept back from his sunburned face; he looked the very ideal of a brave man in a charge. Before the Union onset the rebels were broken and divided into groups, that rallied where the Federals were weakest. Allen Warren, at the head of a few men, struck the body where his brother seemed the master-spirit. The fight lasted but a few seconds, when the brothers crossed swords,

and Allen, in a tone of supplication and demand, shouted: "Russell, for the sake of Heaven, surrender!" "No, by the living God!" came the reply, as Russell sprang back and with a powerful blow laid old Dawn bleeding on the ground. Another instant and a bullet from the carbine of little Ned pierced the heart of the brave rebel, and he fell to the ground.

The enemy did not pursue Jackson's division, believing it to be completely broken. They struck Rousseau, and for a time that gallant division wavered; but the commander was everywhere encouraging and directing, and under his wonderful influence the men seemed inspired. The Third Ohio and Forty-second Indiana, with Pope's Fifteenth Kentucky, received the assault, and like a mighty current that strikes some immovable rock the rebel tide swept round toward the Tenth Ohio, under Lytle. Lytle was behind a crest, his men lying down, prepared to advance at a moment's notice. He knew not that to his left, up a treacherous ravine, the enemy, six thousand strong, were surging. There, within sight of his friends, who could not aid him, he lay in ignorance of his approaching ruin. Men would have given their lives at that moment to have told the gallant Lytle of his danger, but there was no time. Up the ravine and over the crest came the rebels, down upon the heroes of Carnifex, who, recumbent on their faces, were in ignorance of the enemy. An alarm from the extreme right, and the Tenth sprang to their feet, the majority to fall again, but not as living men. Too proud to run, the remnant of that noble regiment, with their faces to the enemy, fell slowly back, leaving the model soldier Lytle lying beside his men. Why did

forty thousand soldiers lie within hearing distance of that battle when one-half their number would have made it the most complete victory of the war? Buell can answer, perhaps. As it was, the fighting closed with this last onset, and the rebels in the darkness fell back to Harrodsburg.

After Robert Warren had seen his own men attended to, in company with his cousin Allen, he sought out that part of the field to the left where Russell was seen to fall. Major Warren hoped that his brother was only wounded. Past rows of dead and 'mid the wounded, who were crying for water, the two men walked, each feeling sick at heart by the losses of the day and the scenes around them, now that the battle was over. They found the body, but it was stiff and cold, with the glazed eyes turned up to the stars and the long hair pushed back from the white forehead, as in that terrible charge.

Robert was the first to speak. "Poor Russell!" he said. "He was noble and brave, and good in everything but this one idea of secession."

Allen had taken his brother's cold hand in his, and the hot tears fell on the boyish, upturned face of the dead.

"We must take him away, Robert. It will break my father's heart; but he must see the body; it will be a sad consolation. To-day the sound of the battle was heard in our old home. God only knows for which of his boys my father prayed." As Allen spoke he beckoned to Archy, who accompanied him, and directed him to carry the body to their camp back on the hill.

Near the spot where Russell fell they found little

Ned, who had stolen out of camp, with his canteen filled with whisky and water, to search for his grandfather. The old man was found still living, though weak from the loss of blood and affected mentally by the fearful gash in the side of his gray head. The old man recognized the voice of little Ned, and asked him how the battle had gone and if Jim was living.

"We uns have licked," said Ned, as he took the old man's head in his lap, "an' Uncle Jim 's shot in the breast. He 's gone to hospital. Reckon, grandad, he 'll come out all right bimeby."

"An' you, Ned, are you hurt?" asked the old man, as he groped about in the darkness, till his hand came in contact with that of Ned's. "They mus n't hurt you, Ned, my boy; yeh see, we uns mus' go back to Tennessee again."

"Dogoned if we ain't agoin' thar too, grandad. Now do n't fuss, an' the cap'n 'll have yeh keered fur like a chile," and Ned looked up at his captain.

Robert stooped and talked to the old man, but he evidently did not recognize him, for he became somewhat profane and imagined himself back in the battle again. Shortly after old Dawn was carried to the field-hospital, and Robert and his cousin searched for Gaines among the dead and wounded of both armies where he had fought, but in vain. The two hours given the captain by General Rousseau had expired, and he reported at once to that officer.

Though tired with the heat and labor of the day, and sick at heart from the loss of his best men, Robert had orders awaiting him to doff his uniform and take such men as he desired for a scout in the direction of Danville and Camp Dick Robinson.

The first campaign of '61 had made him familiar with every foot of ground in that vicinity. The country was filled with bands of unorganized Kentuckians, who were hurrying out of the State, and to assume the character of recruits was a very easy matter at that time. About 2 o'clock in the morning, after a short rest, Robert Warren went south from Perryville, and, after a ride of four miles, struck a lane or mud road that ran in the direction of Danville. The night was dark and black clouds veiled the moon, and, as usual after a battle, drenched the dry earth with the much-needed rain. The lane, after a mile's ride, terminated in a beaten road, a short distance down which the scouts unexpectedly ran into a body of cavalry dismounted by the roadside.

"Hallo! whar are yeh gwine with them hosses?" asked one of the men.

"I'm going to Camp Breckinridge," said Robert, in a disguised tone.

"What is your regiment?" asked another, in an authoritative tone, as he approached Robert and laid his hand on his bridle.

The voice was familiar, and in an instant Robert replied: "Howard Smith's Second Kentucky."

"Why, sir, your regiment is at Lexington," said the man at the horse's head.

"I know that; but I am ordered to report with thirty-five recruits to him at Camp Breckinridge. Would you like to see my papers, sir?" asked Robert.

"No; I presume you are all right sir. What is your name?" again asked the familiar voice.

"Parrish, from Midway, sir; Lieutenant Parrish."

"Oh, yes, lieutenant, I think I have met you before.

My name is Wharton—John Wharton of the Texan Rangers.”

With an impetuosity that startled even the impulsive Wharton, Robert took off his hat, and, rising in his stirrups, he turned to his men and shouted :

“With a will, boys! Three cheers for *General Wharton and the Texas Rangers!*”

The cheers, or yells rather, which followed this command seemed to delight Wharton, for he raised his hat and courteously thanked “the men of the Second Kentucky.”

The directions to Camp Breckinridge were given by Wharton, and Robert and his men, with throbbing hearts, rode on. The sky was inky black, and a hoarse, rumbling sound seemed to fill the air, as if its mutterings came from every point of the compass. On through wearied regiments, lying with their arms beside them 'neath the fences and bushes, past miles of heavily-laden wagons standing in the road, with their drivers asleep on their seats, and the restless mules kicking and braying with impatience for the order to “move on.” Now and then an extemporized hospital, like an Indian wigwam, with a faint light within, showing the ashy, suffering faces of the wounded, could be seen. That whole night, from the field of Perryville, with its thirsting, moaning wounded, to the camps on Dick River, there was presented to the scouts one continued panorama of the black and horrible side of war. Warren felt the undefined terror of his situation increased by the scenes he passed, and he relied upon his men. The men felt the position, perhaps, more keenly, because their thoughts were less occupied, and they relied upon the captain.

Many a brilliant victory would have been a terrible defeat were the thoughts and fears of officers and men known to each other, and many a defeat would have turned to success had the officers the same high hopes as the men, or the men as the officers. It is well that half the world is ever in literal and figurative darkness as to the other half, and providential that the lights interchange. Had Buell been aware of Bragg's condition immediately after the battle of Perryville, five thousand well mounted cavalry would have destroyed all the booty the rebels were taking from Kentucky.

Shortly after daylight the scouts reached Camp Dick Robinson, which they found crowded with stores and raw recruits, who were going out of the State with the rest of Bragg's plunder. Flour, beef, pork, and whisky were scattered around by thousands of barrels. Wagons loaded with the grain, driven by the negroes, and drawn by the horses stolen from Union men were corralled about by hundreds. Quartermasters were busy sending off the supplies, but so blocked were the roads with troops that it was slow work. The fields adjoining the camp were covered with herds of the finest cattle and horses in the State, all waiting for an opening in the line which was marching toward Cumberland Gap.

Strange as it may seem, Captain Warren, after reporting to Colonel Moore, the officer in command of the camp, was not questioned or assigned to any duty. He and his men, however, made themselves busy loading the wagons, and Bragg would have had much more pork and beef and less whisky, when he reached Tennessee, had some warmer friend of the Confederacy been in Warren's position.

In the meantime Robert succeeded in getting off two men with information to General Buell of the rebel position and condition.

The second day after the arrival of the scouts a body of cavalry entered the camp to destroy the stores and gather up the recruits who were unassigned. Captain Warren protested against the burning of the stores until they were certain no more could be got off, and so energetic was he in loading to the utmost and sending off wagons that the officer in charge complimented his ardor and acquiesced. After a time Moore insisted on firing the camp, and with the same earnestness Captain Warren offered to help. While the flames went up from piles of stores the sound of firing came in from the direction of Danville. By twos, threes, and dozens, as the firing increased, the rebels left the blazing camp, till barely one hundred men, under Moore, remained, and these were hard at work, utterly ignorant that their arms had gone off in a wagon that left camp. The time had come to make himself known, and at a signal Captain Warren and his men gathered on the Danville entrance to the camp, and, fastened to a saber, they displayed the Stars and Stripes. Moore, who was a thoroughly brave man, saw it, and called on his men to mount and charge. Charge they did, without arms and through a line of fire, past which Moore succeeded in getting with a few of his men. The rest retreated into camp and surrendered. Leaving a few men to save all the property they could and to guard the prisoners, the captain followed up the line of retreat, gathering up scores of drunken men and stragglers, who were vainly trying to follow the retreating line. Robert knew

that the rebel rear was guarded by reliable troops that had not yet passed, so he wisely fell back toward Camp Dick Robinson with his prisoners, where he found the cavalry of Buell's advance.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LOST SISTER.

Captain Robert Warren was openly thanked by the general commanding for his conduct at Perryville and during the pursuit to Camp Dick Robinson and Crab Orchard, a pursuit that proved fruitless, as a whole, to the Union Army.

Since Robert had read Gasting's letter he often thought of his sister, and made inquiries of the doctors who had been on duty in Nashville, but he did not obtain the slightest clue to her whereabouts, and he began to fear she was dead. He succeeded in obtaining a ten days' leave of absence about the middle of the month, when he started for Louisville and instituted a search through the provost marshals stationed in the towns and garrisons from Louisville south. He advertised in the papers and had editorial notice called to the case, but six days passed and his inquiries brought no response, and the faint hope of ever seeing his sister died out. While at Louisville his cousin Allen wrote him from home, where he was spending a short leave, asking him to run up to Jessamine and stay a few days with him before rejoining his command. Robert was anxious to see his uncle and tender his sympathies to the old man in his affliction. He availed himself of the invitation by starting at once. It was a short ride by the railroad

to Nicholasville, and, reaching there, he was fortunate in finding Allen in the town with a conveyance.

The beautiful home on the Kentucky seemed sadly changed since the lovely spring morning, more than a year before, when Robert arrived from Texas. The grove approaching the house had been the camp-ground of the rebel General Ledbetter's command, and the ground was strewn with the debris and useless *impedimenta* which seems to mark every camp-ground. The sward was blackened and scarred by camp-fires, and the smaller trees and shrubs were bent and torn to form shelters for the troops. The fences were tumbled down, and the burned remnants of rails were scattered about. The flower beds and mossy-edged walks, once watched with taste and care, were unweeded and ragged, and the deep prints of horses' hoofs marked the lawn to the very threshold. The house itself, so quaint and irregular, with its architectural surprises and ivy-covered gables, looked gloomy and desolate. The blinds were down and the shutters closed, while the wind, wintry and cutting, moaned through the trees, sweeping the brown locust leaves in heaps about the gallery and whistling with a saddening sound about the high, brown chimnies. Inside Robert found the once bright Bell, pale and careworn, her face wearing an expression of sadness and age, that the deep mourning dress increased. His uncle was much depressed, and greeted Robert in a low, tremulous voice, as if afraid to wake some loved sleeper whose rest depended on quiet.

The merits of the Union and States' rights questions were no longer matters for discussion, and even Bell avoidedt hem. They spoke of Russell, the generous,

impulsive boy, so honest in his convictions, so noble even in his erring acts. A few days before Robert's arrival they buried Russell on the steep banks of the river he loved so well, and one sweet girl from a neighboring plantation left the freshly-covered grave with a breaking heart. Poor Agnes Ludlow! she sank from that day. The doctors called her sickness a decline, but, like many girls who dropped quietly away during the years of strife, her death-wound came from the battle-field.

Mr. Warren's great loss in the campaign of Bragg was his young, bright boy; but in addition he suffered greatly in his worldly goods. The Confederates had a maxim which they invariably carried out to the letter. If a civilian had anything they desired or needed they took it, saying, "If you are in favor of the Confederacy, you will give this willingly to secure success. If you are in favor of the Yankees, you deserve to lose it." The cattle, horses, and negroes were taken without receipt by Bragg's quartermasters. The granaries were depleted, and the wagons taken to carry off the grain. Even the park where Mr. Warren kept his deer was unfenced by Ledbetter's men, and the animals shot in very wantonness. Bell acknowledged during that first evening that the Confederates were not the noble, chivalric men she had imagined, though she could not help adding:

"I am sure the Yankees would have been worse."

Mr. Warren deplored his afflictions as too severe for one who stood aloof and looked impartially on the contest. After making such a statement, Robert said:

"You will pardon me, uncle, but it is impossible for any American to be neutral in this struggle. Ho

may imagine himself to be so, but his sympathies are with one side or the other. I have made it a rule—and I think it safe—that when a man is neutral or doubtful, set him down as opposed to you.”

“You are not just to me, Robert,” said the old man, leaning his head on his hand and sighing; “no man is before me in his love for the Government, but it’s very hard to go against one’s friends and interests.”

“God knows how keenly I have felt that, father,” said Allen as he gently took his father’s thin hand in his. “Had Russell fought by my side I could not have loved him more, and in the very heat of battle, opposed to me as he was, I would have died to save him. But no matter where a man was born, or what blood runs in his veins, if he casts down what honor and patriotism call on me to uphold, that man is my foe while he resists, and it is my duty to oppose him.”

“It seems to me our family in Texas and here has been fearfully afflicted—more so than any I know of, though I think, not excepting poor Russell, that we have all tried to do our duty,” said Robert, as he rose and opening a widow, gazed out on the bleak woods and neglected grounds.

The conversation was changed a dozen times, but ever and anon the subject uppermost in each mind would come to the surface, and the war with its horrors was the fruitful theme.

Robert staid twenty-four hours at his uncle’s, and desiring to visit Perryville to look for Gaines and Tennessee, with his father, old Dawn, he determined to leave so as to reach his command promptly on the expiration of his short leave of absence. His reception had been so kind, and Bell so much like the

sweet girl he had kissed adieu that stormy night at Gonzelletta, when he started north, that he felt very sad at parting, and prayed that another young soldier, dear to his cousin, might be spared by the Union bullets.

Buell's army, after its fatiguing, fruitless pursuit, returned to Lebanon, where it was again organizing to retrace its steps South. Robert proceeded to Perryville at once, hoping to see his friends. Reaching there, he found Dr. Hatchett acting as post surgeon, and from him he learned that the three men in whom he was so much interested were living and in the hospital, a Baptist church in the village. The doctor was a kind-hearted Christian gentleman, and a Kentuckian. He volunteered to accompany Robert, and as they entered the church they met, 'mid the crowd of wounded men sitting about the door, old Dawn, with his grey head so disguised by plasters and bandages as to be hardly recognizable. He was smoking a corn-cob pipe, and entertaining his interested auditors by an eulogy of Andrew Jackson, and an account of the Cherokee Indians, among whom he was raised. The old man recognized the captain first, and springing from his seat with the activity of a young man, he seized Robert's hand, and in a voice filled with honest earnestness he said: "'Fore heaven, cap, I'm glad to see yeh. Dogond if I do n't feel all right this minute!" Then dropping his voice he asked:

"How is he? Did ther boy come out squar?"

"You mean little Ned?" said the captain.

"Yes, him; I've been right smart riled a thinkin' on him."

"He is safe and sound; I had him made a sergeant after Perryville."

“Now, I swar,” said the old man, looking around on the group of soldiers, “who’d have thought of my little boy bein’ a sargin. Reckon the doctor’ll let me start back right off—I never felt better in my life.”

The doctor laughed heartily at this, and promised that if the old man took care of himself he would be able to return in ten days.

“Wall, doc, jis’ say what I’ve got to do, and by the ghost of old Andrew I’ll git right down to it.”

“Where is Tennessee?” asked Robert, as he stepped into the hospital.”

“Poor Jim!” said the old man, “the rebs jist went for him heavy.”

The doctor and Robert, accompanied by the old man, walked down the long avenue of cots with their pale, suffering occupants. Near where the pulpit once stood they stopped before a bed that was made on the floor, and beside which two nurses knelt, one of them holding the long, wasted arm of Tennessee. Robert could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses. The long, yellow beard had been cut off, and the thick, sun-burned hair, that once gave a leonine appearance to the scout, was shaved closely. The blue eyes, so full of humor and kindness, now glared with the expression of a maniac, and from the long, full face the flesh had fallen away, leaving the brow skin drawn tight on the prominent cheek-bones.

Robert knelt down, the tears starting from his eyes, and in a voice gentle as a woman’s whispered, “Tennessee, Tennessee, my brave boy! do you know me?”

The large eyes rolled, and Tennessee stared wildly around, then tried to disengage his arm.

“The ball passed from right to left through both

lungs," said the doctor. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have died at once, but he is a giant. This unfortunate fever has shaken the hopes I had for his recovery. A speedy change must come, captain; he cannot last many hours."

"Is it brave? Is it squar', tell me, yeh houn's?" Tennessee turned his head as he raved, and for an instant he seemed to recognize the captain. Then the glare came back, and in an intense whisper, as if speaking under some strong, suppressed excitement, he said:

"Let me out, damn yeh! Let me out an' I'll come back! Oh God, they're a-drownded! Don't cuss me so, Cap! Here, look in at Jim. Dawn's heart. Ain't it clean? I didn't mean ter harm yeh, afore God."

Here Tennessee struggled to free his hand and expose his heart, but the nurses **restrained** him. The doctor succeeded in forcing some medicine between the thin, ashy lips, flecked with foam. Then he knelt and felt the pulse for a minute or more. Gradually the eyes closed, and two little streams of dark blood trickled from the open nostrils.

Old Dawn became so excited that the doctor had him removed, and Robert promised to see him again.

"Doctor, that man dying there is one of the few men in this world that I would feel willing to die for. He has been everything that a brave, generous, noble-hearted man could be. I feel as if his death would kill me. For God's sake, doctor, save him!"

The tears rose to Robert's eyes, and the kind-hearted doctor led him away. When they got into the open air, the doctor said:

"It would be foolish to deceive you with a hope.

Everything has been done for this man, and if he should recover I will regard it as nothing short of a miracle. However, you can depend upon me to the extent of my power."

Robert thanked the doctor, and as they walked through the town, he met a number of his wounded men hobbling around and carrying their arms in slings. Among the latter was "Indian Nation," and he expressed in his exaggerated, Western way, his feelings at seeing the captain.

"We didn't bury Aleck Cameron on the field, Cap. Some of us boys toted him back. He's fixed up thar on the hill, under that black rock. And afore we leave we're a goin' to cut his name thar. Poor Aleck, he was jest game."

"Indeed was he. No braver man is left," said the captain, shaking Indian Nation's unwounded hand.

Gaines had been promoted to a lieutenancy for gallant conduct at Perryville. Robert would have called on him first, but he had to pass the church where Tennessee lay wounded, in order to reach the private residence used as an officers' hospital, where Gaines lay with a shattered leg.

He was delighted to see Robert, and despite his great suffering, he bore up with a cheerfulness which surprised his friend, for hitherto he seemed to act without much feeling, and simply from the motive of duty.

He spoke of his wound in a light way, assured the captain, and appealed to the doctor to corroborate his statement that he would be about in a few days.

"But, Gaines, old boy," said the captain, "where were you wounded? I have an indistinct recollection

of seeing you in the advance when we charged on Gilbert's front."

"Yes, I was ahead. The fact is, I got beside myself, and made a bee-line for a rebel flag. I got it, and the next instant I felt my leg crack like a pipe-stem, and down I went. You were then to the left. The line began to fall back, and I begged some of the Missourians, with whom we were mixed up, to carry me back. They did so, and I hung on to the colors like a child to a Christmas toy. I was taken to our rear, and lay for hours on the field. I must say I thought about dying at times, when I fainted with the heat and loss of blood. By the way, Robert, here are the colors."

Gaines drew from under his pillow a barred flag, tattered by balls and stained with blood. The blue ground had a lone star in the center, and in heavy letters on the white stripe were the words, "Presented by the ladies of Fort Bend to Company F, Eighth Texas Cavalry."

"This, indeed, is a prize worth struggling for. Let me congratulate you on capturing the colors of the best men in the Southern army."

"Seriously, I did not know to what regiment they belonged, all were fighting dismounted. I think I must have been crazy when I started. However, that is all past. I was sorry to hear of your cousin's death. What have you heard from home?"

Robert related his fruitless search for his sister, and also told Gaines that he was then en route to Labanon to join the remnant of his company. Gaines was sanguine about his speedy return to the front. After Robert had congratulated him on his promotion, and

tendered his kindly services, he bade his old friend good-bye, and promising to write as often as possible, he returned to the hospital. Tennessee was asleep, his long arms stretched by his side, his mouth open, and only the slowly-heaving breast indicated life.

Robert knelt beside the cot for a short time with bowed head; then he rose, and fearing to touch the thin, skeleton-like hand, lest it might arouse the sleeper, he walked quietly away. He gave Old Dawn, whom he met outside, a little money for his own wants, and begging the doctor to write him at once if Tennessee died, he mounted and started for Lebanon.

South again the Army turned, jaded and broken by fruitless marches and indecisive encounters. Bragg had entered East Tennessee in safety, and was moving around by Chattanooga and Stevenson to confront the Union forces again in Middle Tennessee.

At the little town of Evansville Robert met some relatives of Mrs. Boardman, all of whom sympathized with the cause of the Confederacy. He told them of the sufferings of the Union people in Texas, and spoke of his fears as to the safety of Mrs. Boardman and Amy.

The Rev. William McArthur, a cousin of Mrs. Boardman, offset Robert's account by describing the advent and exit of Jim Brownlow's troops in their village. The clergyman spoke in a voice of holy indignation.

"Providence, for some wise purpose best known to Him, Captain Warren, afflicted us a week since with the First Tennessee Cavalry. Col. Johnson, or "Bob Johnson," as his men call him, is supposed to com-

mand that collection of most vile men. Johnson is a son of that very bad man, the Yankee governor of Tennessee. Brownlow is lieutenant-colonel; his mer. call him 'Jim;' he is the son of the parson; thank God, there are not many such clergymen!" and the Rev. McArthur, of the Cumberland Presbyterians, raised his eyes in the direction supposed to indicate the location of heaven. Then he continued, with a sanctironious sigh: "Those vile, unorganized men, six hundred strong, entered our peaceful village on the holy Sabbath day. I purposed holding worship in my church that night, but my dear parishioners, knowing the vile religious tenets of Brownlow, and the utterly degraded character of Johnson, restrained me. The officers stopped at Davis's Hotel. Mr. Davis is a most excellent man, and a cousin of his excellency President Davis. The men were scattered around, quartered on the people, and any opposition to their wishes resulted in coarse language and threats. They changed their old, broken-down horses for the best in the place, and even mine, presented by my people, was not beyond their avarice. He was a beautiful, faithful horse; a child could drive him. In his place there is a huge, bony skeleton, spavined, back sore, and with a tendency to bite that is fearful, and a habit of lying down in harness if he hears a pistol fired. It is not of this I complain, Captain Warren, hard as it is to bear," said the Rev. McArthur in a reproving tone, as he noticed the symptoms of a smile about the captain's mouth. "The worst is to come. Johnson demanded whisky from Mr. Davis, which that gentleman prudently withheld. Thereupon Johnson, who occupied the parlor and sat on the sofa with a

chair supporting each of his legs, sent for Mr. Davis, and, handing him the sacred book, presented by his Sunday-school class, and which Mr. Davis has ever prized and kept as a parlor ornament, he said: 'Your name is Davis?' in a coarse, insulting tone.

" 'It is,' replied Mr. Davis, firmly.

" 'You refuse to give me whisky,' said Johnson.

" 'As proprietor of this hotel I cannot sell liquor on the Sabbath day,' answered Mr. Davis.

" 'Who the devil dared to ask you to violate your principles, sir? I want whisky for nothing. Now, you've got to swear you have none in this shanty, or I'll raise a rumpus that'll make your head swim.'

" Mr. Davis, of course, refused to swear, and thereupon Johnson called for his comrade, Brownlow. To him he exaggerated the supposed offense of Mr. Davis, and then said:

" 'Now, Jim, if you were in my place, what would you do with this man?'

" 'Do!' said Brownlow, in a drunken voice. 'Why, Bob, I'd just gag the old chap and send him to jail.'

" 'You see the advantage of a good lieutenant-colonel, Mr. Davis,' said Johnson. Then calling a sergeant, they sent Mr. Davis to jail. That is, we have no place used for the retaining of criminals here, so they converted the house of God—my church—into a jail!'

Mr. McArthur's voice became tremulous, and he took a cup of water to strengthen himself for his task.

"I deplore this conduct on the part of Colonel Johnson," said the captain. "In defense of my comrades, however, I must say, Mr. McArthur, that it is

the exception to the rule. We try to treat even our enemies, when captured, with consideration."

"I have not concluded, Captain Warren. Wait till I have told you the whole of this most infamous transaction. Mr. Davis was confined in the church and a guard placed over him. This outrage came to the ears of myself and some brother clergymen, and we repaired at once to the hotel and remonstrated with Colonel Johnson. He felt like relenting, but, unfortunately for us, he submitted the case to Brownlow. I did not like this bad young man's reckless appearance. He turned to me and said:

"'You can arrange this matter at once by giving the colonel some whisky. He's a very moderate drinker; ten gallons will make him as happy as a lamb and innocent as a dove till morning.'

"'That's so, Jim. If they do the proper thing they can allay my troubled spirit and release from dungeon you pining man.' As Johnson said this he pointed to an oil painting of Mr. Davis hanging above the piano.

"Of course we refused to comply with this request, and were about to withdraw, when Johnson told the sergeant to detain us.

"'Jim,' he said, turning to Brownlow, 'hav'n't I the temper of an A No. 1 angel?'

"'If you don't know that you're angelically disposed, Bob, it is'nt for want of my telling you. I have watched with wondering awe your familiarity and daily intercourse with the spirits.' As Brownlow spoke I trembled at his profanity, but what could be expected from the son of such a father?

"'Now, Jim, what shall we do with these holy men?' asked Johnson.

“‘Put them in jail with the landlord,’ said the fiend. And they did, Mr. Warren; they incarcerated us in the house of prayer.” Mr. McArthur showed symptoms of weakness, and sipped some more water at this part of the narrative.

After this, a number, indeed the majority of the gentlemen in town, without regard to church, called on Johnson, and they too were incarcerated in the same way. This was not the worst feature of this most abominable transaction. Our wives went to the brutes in a body and demanded our release, and—would you believe it, Captain Warren, you who wear the uniform those men disgraced?—they actually sent the ladies to jail, too. I can never forget the agony of that night,” and Mr. McArthur pressed his white hand to his brow.

“But did they keep you in there all night,” asked Robert.

“No,” replied Mr. McArthur, “we knelt in prayer, and asked for advice. The enemy had the power and we compromised by letting Mr. Davis give them the whisky. Then we returned to our distracted families.”

Mr. McArthur had told the longest story, and Robert, suppressing his feelings, deplored the horrors of war.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SCOUTS RE-ENFORCED.

Back again to Tennessee the Union Army marched, mortified and discouraged by the useless campaign in Kentucky. A feeling of discontent prevailed, and the men lost that confidence which they had after the successes of the previous spring. While General Buell was certainly an accomplished gentleman and a soldier of undoubted bravery, it was wise in the Government to replace him by Rosecrans at that time. The latter officer secured at once the confidence of the troops, both by the reforms he instituted and his previous brilliant record.

Captain Warren's company was increased by details from other regiments to the number of one hundred and eleven men. As a rule they were well acquainted with the South by a residence therein before the war. Among the men who joined him in the latter part of November was Lieutenant Alfred Richardson, of the Second Middle Tennessee Cavalry. He was the very ideal of a Southern gentleman, of a good family and splendid education. He was about twenty-eight years of age, of middle height, firmly though slightly built, with brown hair and large, dark eyes, with a broad brow, which the sun never seemed to tan. In manner he was somewhat reserved, but toward those whom he esteemed, he was frankness itself. There was a mag-

netism about Richardson which won men at once, while it seemed to repel familiarity. From the first he and Robert became friends of the strongest kind, for their mutual regard had its foundation in respect.

The early December came cold and dreary, with its leafless trees, muddy roads, and drizzling rain and sleet. It was just the time when warm clothing and cheerful fires in cozy rooms were pleasant. But the Army of the Cumberland was houseless and restless, anxious to measure its strength under a new leader with Bragg. The Confederate troops had made a wonderful march—through southeastern Kentucky and Cumberland Gap into East Tennessee, then down to Chattanooga and around by Stevenson to Murfreesboro', where they confronted the Union forces. The summer's heat, with dusty roads and exhausting marches, was hard on the troops, but the cool nights of summer brought a respite when men could rest. The winter's constant cold, with muddy camping grounds, leaking tents, and marches when the weary feet seemed covered with cold, liquid lead, was still harder on the men, but they bore all cheerfully after Rosecrans took command.

One night while Captain Warren's men were doing picket duty for a cavalry force that was raiding in the direction of McMinnville, an incident occurred, the narration of which will throw some light on the condition and feeling of the Union soldiers at this time in the South and West. It was a cold night, when the wind seemed to cut every object it struck, and an icy enamel covered everything exposed to its force. Lieutenant Richardson had charge of an advanced picket post on the McMinnville road. Under the brow

of the hill on which the pickets were posted, the men had built a fire and piled up a heap of branches to windward to break the force of the northwester. The horses, though blanketed, drew themselves up and shivered and crowded together in a vain effort to keep warm. Robert had charge of a picket front of over half a mile, and as they were close to Forrest at the time, he exercised more than his usual caution. It was no uncommon occurrence at this time for fugitive slaves under cover of the darkness to pass the rebel lines and seek the Union pickets with the hope of protection and liberty. Orders from headquarters, however, made it imperative on the officers into whose commands the fugitive came to retain them till their masters came to claim their property. It was galling to many a brave man, who was in favor of or indifferent about slavery, thus to be made a slave-catcher for his enemies. About three o'clock on the night in question Robert visited Richardson's post. The men, with their belts drawn tight and their great-coat collars turned up till they met their slouched hats, walked nervously around or crouched before the fire, so cold on one side and smoky on the other that comfort and heat were impossible at the same time. Richardson alone seemed indifferent to the blast; his face was pale and stern, and he met his captain as he dismounted with more than his habitual reserve. On reaching the fire Robert was struck with a group of negroes huddled together and evidently suffering from some great fatigue or over-excitement. There were four, lightly clad and poorly shod; two men, one quite old, the other about thirty, with a young woman and a child. The woman looked earnestly

from face to face, as if about to ask some vital question, while she hugged her little one closer to her breast, and drew around it the ends of the ragged black shawl in which it was wrapped. The old man had that patriarchal look peculiar to old negroes. His head was perfectly white, and his close, straggling beard and eye-brows of the same color formed a strange contrast to his black face, and looked as if the intense cold had frosted the hair. But the look of painful anxiety on the face, and the blending expression of pain and fright, gave at first sight the impression that his "hair had grown white in a single night, as men have grown through sudden fear." The young man seemed indifferent to the cold. He was powerfully built, and his thin cotton garments served but to show the muscular form they so poorly covered. He sat on the ground beside the young woman, his face resting between his hands, and a stout staff, with a bundle attached, lying on the ground beside him. A thick leather belt was fastened around his waist, between which and his body a heavy hatchet was fastened. He looked the very picture of fierce desperation. His eyes were fixed intently on the fire, unmoved by the fitful flashes with which the cold wind fanned it. The muscles of his face about the high cheek-bones seemed thick and swollen, while the large mouth, with its heavy, compressed lips, looked as if cut out of black marble.

Robert knew at once they were fugitives, and a chill not excited by the howling wind passed through him. Approaching the fire he stooped to warm his hands, while he addressed the young black man :

"Well, boy, where did you come from to-night?"

The black man raised his head and looked with an expression of half supplication and half wonder at Robert, without speaking. Robert repeated his question, and the negro, prefacing his reply with a sigh, which only the compressed lips had hitherto repressed, said :

“Mauss, me an’ dad an’ Sal an’ de liddle one have come to you for freedom. You ’se de Yankees, is n’t yeh?”

“Yes, boy, they call us ‘Yankees.’ Where did you come from?”

“Mauss, it ’s a long way off. Fur two days we ’ve bin in de woods. De young un ’s a ’most dead, an’ dad ain’t strong any more. De sale wuz to be yesterday, an’ we left fur de Yankees.”

“What do you mean about the sale?”

“Why, Mauss Dick wuz killed in Kaintuck. We b’longed to him, an’ dey wuz to sell de place yesterday. Sal wuz on anodder place, but I knowed I wuz goin’ souf from her an’ dad an’ de chile, so we left fur de Yanks.”

“Do you know, boy, that the Yankees cannot take care of you. We are not fighting to make the slaves free; we are fighting for the Union. We must keep you till to-morrow, and if any one comes after you we have orders to send you back to your master.”

As Robert spoke the black man rose to his feet and stood near his wife, who had uttered a low, wailing cry. The lately compressed lips quivered with emotion, and the large black eyes fairly flashed, as one strong, muscular hand instinctively clutched the handle of the hatchet. The old man stood up beside his son, and in a tremulous voice, with clasped hands, he said :

“Do n’t, mauss; please, do n’t! Dey ’ll kill Ike, an’ I ’m no good no more; please do n’t, mauss!”

The black woman pressed her shining little one more closely and sprang to her feet with a frightened look in her face, as if ready for flight. Low muttering curses came from the soldiers around the fire, and one of the men growled loud enough for the officers to hear, “If I wore shoulder-straps, damned if I would n’t resign afore I’d do it. Now them’s my feelings.”

“I wish to speak to you, captain,” said Richardson, walking away from the fire, his thin lips so firmly set that he seemed to speak with his close white teeth. Robert followed him for twenty yards, when the lieutenant turned, and, drawing himself up till he looked nearly as tall as Robert, he asked :

“Captain Warren, do you intend turning over those black people till their rebel owners come to claim them?”

“They came into your post, lieutenant; it is for you to do this thing. You know the orders about fugitive slaves?”

“I do, sir, and I blush for the cause in which I am engaged.”

“Well, what do you propose doing?” asked the captain.

Richardson’s voice trembled with indignation as he said :

“First, I have made up my mind to place those people beyond the reach of pursuit if in my power, and, in the second place, after we have left the enemy’s front I intend resigning and tearing off the uniform of a cause that God cannot approve nor honest

men fight for. I will not be made a slave-catcher to conciliate treason."

"Lieutenant, I feel our position as keenly as you can," said the captain, taking Richardson's hand in his; "but I have always carried out my orders to the letter. I have grown sick of conciliation. I will help you to get these poor people to the rear, but you must not resign, Richardson; I have not so many friends that I can afford to part with you."

Richardson returned the pressure of the captain's hand, and the men understood each other better. When they returned to the fire Archy was busy cooking coffee, and assuring his colored friends that the captain "would do jes right," and "not to fret yer poor souls out fur noffin'."

The black man looked earnestly into Richardson's face as they stood near the fire, and the lieutenant, anxious to relieve the suspense of the fugitives, said:

"Here is your best friend, boy," pointing to Robert. "He has given me liberty to do as I choose with you. I will take you back to the Union camps and then send you North, where your rebel owners will never go, except to be despised."

The old man seized the lieutenant's hand, and with words of homely gratitude pressed it to his lips, while the young man placed his arm about his trembling wife as if to support his own weakness, and then down the face lately so rigid and determined the hot tears flowed, while Archy, still busy with his coffee, stopped to clasp the hands of his colored friends and to impress upon them the necessity of "praisin' de Lor', who led de chillen wid de fiah by night."

The wind seemed less cold by the picket post that

night, and the gloom fled from the faces of the men, who by a hundred little acts of kindness showed the sympathetic bond that unites in distress men of every land and race and creed.

The expedition to McMinnville resulted in a skirmish and a withdrawal of the Union cavalry to the main army near Nashville, where a battle was daily expected with Bragg.

It was nearing Christmas, a time ever suggestive of happy homes and pleasant reunions, but the time brought no rest to the armies edging daily closer together for the contest before Murfreesboro'. In the meantime the cavalry, reorganized under Stanley, checked the daring raids of Morgan and Wheeler, who hitherto had proved a serious annoyance to the Union communications.

December 31 was a bright, beautiful day; the sun was warm as an early May-day. Rosecrans was ready for the conflict, and his forces were gradually advanced to Stone River, a little northwest of Murfreesboro', between which town and the river General Bragg, on ground of his own choosing, had posted his sixty-five thousand veterans under Breckinridge, Polk, and Hardee. Opposed to them were Crittenden, Thomas, and McCook, with scarcely fifty thousand men. For days before the front was one continued skirmish line, and the rear the scene of a score of well-conducted raids under Wheeler, Wharton and Morgan. By daylight Hardee had started the work of slaughter. Crossing the river, which was fordable at every point, preceded by a cloud of sharpshooters, Cleburne and Cheatham, with eight brigades of infantry, burst from the jungle of cedars and oaks

before McCook had a thought of their presence, and before twenty minutes the right wing of Rosecrans's army was a routed mob. Johnson's division was literally crushed without striking a blow. Sheridan was the first to rally his men, and Davis quickly came to his aid, but the stubborn courage of those gallant men offered but a temporary resistance to Hardee. The accomplished Sill was slain early in the fight, and a score of officers like Shaeffer and Roberts were wounded or slain. In the meantime the fighting became general along the front, and the rebels began the old game of doubling the army back upon itself, while their cavalry in swarms pushed to the rear of McCook and Thomas. It was well that Thomas held the ever-unflinching center; well that Negley guarded his right, with the heroic Rousseau at his back. Between Negley and McCook the daring rebel Irishman, Pat Cleburne, led his brigades, intending to annihilate the right, but Negley was more than a match for him. With a determination and valor that entitles him to the proud designation of "the hero of Stone River," he formed left in front and literally crushed out the confident masses of the enemy. But Hardee was not to be deterred. Column after column was hurled against Negley till his overpowered, exhausted men were forced through the dense undergrowth to his rear, and with him the magnificent division of Rousseau. By twelve o'clock the fate of the Union army seemed sealed, and as at Shiloh the line, excepting in McCook's front, was doubled up and crowded. More than this, and worse than Shiloh, four thousand well-mounted men were actually on the line of retreat to Nashville, destroying the Union trains. In the meantime Sher-

idan had gathered up his men, and from an ammunition train, saved by the gallant Captain Thruston, replenished the empty cartridge-boxes. On a good position he checked the rebels, while Hazen and Hascall routed the enemy to the rear, and Hardee with his veteran brigade stood like an impassable barrier to the right. During the day Polk and Hardee made desperate efforts to force back Thomas, but without success, while Crittenden and Breckinridge thundered at each other across the river.

The old year went out with promise of a glorious victory to the South, and of utter annihilation to the arms of the Union. Seven thousand men were killed, wounded, or prisoners, and as many more useless and demoralized. But with the last toll of the clock that sounded the knell of '62 the shackles fell to the ground from four millions of slaves. The time set by Lincoln had expired, and the first sun of '63 saw the Union banner the emblem of Union and Liberty.

During the night Rosecrans drew back, shortened and strengthened his line, excepting the left, which headed toward Murfreesboro', the key of the rebel position. The new year came, and during the day the troops on both sides fought for position, without coming to close quarters. The anxiety and fatigue of that second day were even worse than the first, and during the black night which followed, the front flashed with one continued blaze between the pickets. The 2d came and with the early dawn the rebels opened a fire so extended and continued that it seemed as if their front were one mighty volcano that belched and hurled out missiles of destruction, before which fences, trees, and the very earth itself was pounded

into splinters and ridges. Sheridan, Rousseau, Thomas, and finally Crittenden opened, and for two terrible hours the earth seemed to tremble beneath the terrible blows. Gradually the fire was concentrated on Crittenden, to the left of whose line Captain Warren was stationed. One by one the Union guns seemed to answer, and then like magic the gray masses rose from the earth, and, with thrilling yells, Breckinridge's men, Roger Hanson in the advance, dashed into the cold river, up the muddy banks, and out on the open fields beyond which Palmer and Van Cleve, with Negley from the right, met them. Then began a slaughter unequalled on that bloody field. Hanson fell dead in the lead. Still on the men came till within close range of nine thousand muskets, then the gray lines melted and the fragments in confusion rushed back to the river; but even here the bank did not save them. They plunged into the water, but it was to find it beaten with spray by the artillery of Van Cleve, and to meet a more certain death 'neath its surface. In the meantime Wharton, now leading a brigade, had crossed the river above and swept down on a train hurrying up to Palmer. The Second Tennessee, with Warren's battalion, was ordered to intercept him, and at a mad gallop they sped over a corn-field and through a cedar jungle, where they found Wharton in possession of four wagons. The charge sounded, and charge they did, fighting hand to hand around the wagons, which had taken fire and become equally dangerous to both sides. The rebels fell back, Warren rashly following them toward the river, when suddenly a regiment of Wheeler's men rose from the ground. It was too late to turn, and

in another instant Don, riderless and wild, dashed into the rebel lines, and Robert Warren, with the hot blood pouring from his mouth, and nose, and breast, lay gasping on the muddy earth, while his routed men fled back toward Van Cleve.

It was now late in the afternoon, and a cold, pelting rain came driving over the field, while the sound of battle died out with the day.

As Robert fell to the ground his head struck against a stone, and for hours he lay insensible. About ten o'clock he revived and tried to rise, but a choking sensation overcame him. A hard mass seemed to stick in his throat and stop his nostrils; by a desperate effort he coughed up the obstruction. Then a hot stream poured out of his mouth, and with the distant camp-fires swimming in a circle before his giddy sight he fell fainting to the earth. It is hard for a strong man to die. It is wonderful, even considering their strength, that some of the wounded survived an hour, and equally wonderful, in looking at some of the dead on the battle-field, to see how little it took to kill them. The cold rain beat on Robert Warren's blood-covered face, and he revived again in the darkness, and placed his hand on the open gash on the back of his head. He tried to collect his scattered senses. He fell in the charge. He remembered the ambushade, and the terrible blow in the right breast, and the hot blood pouring from his mouth as he fell to the ground. He saw Richardson near him last, and Don flying toward the enemy. He was struck; and he rose on one arm and felt his breast. The coat was wet and clammy with clotted blood. He searched with his cold fingers and felt the jagged hole so close

to his heart, that as he inserted his finger he wondered that he lived. He could not last long. He managed to open his coat and thrust his hand inside the bloody shirt, and felt the hole with fragments of his clothing sticking about the wound. He was fearfully cold and stiff. Thoughts of home and Amy, and another worldly object, chased each other through his reeling brain. There were camp fires gleaming beyond. He could not tell the direction. The enemy might be there. But it mattered not, he could leave his dying requests, even with the enemy, and die near their fire.

Where was Archy? He managed to rise, but again the camp-fires seemed to swim around him, and the choking sensation came as he tried to breathe. He opened his mouth and gasped, while the cold, cutting air entered the open wound. He took a few steps, reeling like a drunken man, when he stopped and pressed his hand to his head. He heard a voice near him; the sound seemed to revive him, though it was the groan of a wounded man.

"Where are you?" he gasped, and, dropping on his hands and knees, he crawled in the direction of the sound.

"Here, here, friend. Oh, God, help me!"

"I am coming, friend; where's your hand—your hand?"

"Shattered, broken. O, for one drink of water!" Still around Robert's shoulders hung his double-flasked canteen. He had forgotten that. There was brandy in one side, water in the other. Groping in the darkness, he reached the groaning man.

"Here is brandy, friend, drink," he said, holding out the canteen.

“Oh, thanks—God bless you! Put it to my lips,” said the wounded man. Could it be there was a mortal more suffering, more helpless than himself? Robert could not raise the wounded man’s head, but he placed the canteen to his cold lips, and the stranger drank, with a sigh of relief. Then Robert, coughing up the clotted blood which every instant threatened to choke him, took a mouthful of the brandy, and in a few seconds his cold extremities began to experience sensation. He lay down beside the wounded soldier and asked, as he adjusted his head :

“Where are you hit, friend?”

“In the spine or shoulders, I do n’t know just which. I cannot move. Oh, God! if I could only sleep or die. Are you wounded?”

“Yes, shot through the breast. Mustered out, I fear. What’s your regiment?”

“Fifth Tennessee, Wheeler. Have we won?”

“I hope not, friend; I’m a Yankee. Take more brandy.”

The wounded man drank again, and as Robert removed the flask he said :

“God bless you, friend! Take my hand in yours.”

Robert took the hand, small as a woman’s and colder than his own, in his.

“I hate no man; I never knew an enemy till the war.”

“Nor I, and God knows I hate none for fighting me bravely,” said Robert, stretching his stiff limbs beside the wounded Tennessean.

For some time both men were quiet, then the stranger turned his head and asked :

“Friend, do you still hold my hand?”

"I do."

"God bless you; I want some one near me when I die. I have a mother."

"So have I, friend, a noble mother."

The powerless hand of the stranger still rested cold in Robert's.

"Promise me—but first your name."

"My name is Robert Warren. I commanded a battalion of scouts in the Union Army, but I feel as if I had led them for the last time."

"God forbid, God forbid, my friend; but promise me, if you live, to have me buried where my mother can get my body; save some of my hair. Frazer—Franklin——"

The wounded man stopped talking, and Robert placed his hand on his forehead, forgetting for a time his own intense suffering and his thoughts of death.

"He is dead," he whispered to himself.

"No; dying, dying. Tell Jennie I thought of her and the boys, the boys——" Again the voice, that seemed to come from a lifeless corpse, ceased, and at the same time Robert felt the terrible choking sensation and tried to rise, but he fell, with the hot blood pouring from his wound, beside the dead Tennessean.

Moments of painful consciousness, each growing less distinct, during the long hours; a burning thirst, which he was too weak to gratify, parched his dry throat, where the choking lump seemed ever rising.

Day came, cold, foggy, and rainy. For a time he struggled to retain consciousness, hoping for the details to pass, but gradually the hope and the senses died out, and Robert Warren, with his bloody face turned upward, lay beside the dead Tennessean.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE FIELD AFTER THE BATTLE.

Slowly the gray dawn came through the clouds above and the fog beneath, revealing the mangled forms and upturned faces of the dead, clad in blue and gray, sleeping so calmly side by side, dying perhaps with such mutual words of comfort that the angels that carried them up did not look on them as foes. Moving rapidly through the mist, the details searched for the wounded that fearful morning, finding more often the dead. But few wounded men could survive that night of cold and storm; it chilled the blood of the most robust. So the details with their stretchers carried off the dead. Now they lifted from the wet ground a slender, boy-like form, with a shattered arm dangling by his side, and a pool of black blood where he lay, but no expression of the agony he had felt on the smooth, pale face and blue lips. A light load—so they lay the boy across the stretcher, and pick up a tall, bearded man. His head drops back as they raise him, and the white bones glisten through the mangled throat, where the terrible grape-shot crashed. Back to the trenches, called graves, the two damp-looking soldiers walk with their load, and range them above the pit for search and recognition. The details are swarming in the direction where Breckinridge charged along Stone River

with its cold, inky current emerging from and rolling down into the gray mist. There are dead men lying on the bloody stones, with the black water laving head or feet. In death they are clinging to the protruding branches of the skeleton-looking tree that rises and dips in the flood. But on the muddy, slippery bank, plowed into ridges by that unequalled artillery storm, and across the corn-field, beaten into mortar by five thousand hurrying feet, there are dead men in groups, where they rallied in line, where they charged, and singly, close up to the Union guns, carried there by desperate valor. Still up the river, near the scrub-oak jungle, there are dead horses and blue-clad forms lying around. The details clear the ground as they advance. Two men of the Eighteenth Kentucky are approaching the ground where General Wharton attacked the wagons, and Warren with the Tennesseans charged. Suddenly they are startled by a cry that sends the blood in cold waves back to their hearts. It comes from the open space beyond the jungle, and the two men hurry to the spot, where a huge negro, the very picture of fierce despair, sits on the ground, holding in his arms the inanimate form of a tall young soldier. The hat is off, the black hair is lank and bloody, and the upper teeth are driven, as if in some mortal agony, or struggle with death, into the still clenched, bleeding under lip.

“Oh, God, let me die! Oh, Mauss Robut, my life, my brudder! speak to me. I’m Archy! Oh, Lor’ ob Israel, help me now! help me! help me!” And the black man swept back the matted hair and kissed the broad forehead, and rubbed the brown, cold hands.

“Hello, boy! what’s wrong here?” asked one of

the men as they approached the black man with their stretcher.

“Oh, come, quick. Come, dis is Mauss Robut! Captain Warren! Don't let him die. God'll bless yeh! Oh, don't let Mauss Robut die!”

One of the men placed his hand on the pulse, kneeling beside the body, and in a sad voice said :

“It's a pity! I've seen this man when alive, and I never looked on a handsomer horseman.”

“Oh, don't talk so. It'll kill me. He ain't dead. Oh, carry him, tote him to the doctor's. I'll carry one end. Don't let Mauss Robut die in de cold. Dar, he's bleedin' now.”

As Archy spoke, the red current began to flow again from the captain's mouth, and the soldier kneeling near him opened the drooping eyelid, then laying his ear on the bloody coat above the captain's heart, he rose hurriedly, and with an excited oath, said to his companion :

“He's alive, Ned. Off with your coat and throw it on the stretcher.” As the soldier spoke, he pulled off his own great-coat and laying it on Frazer's dead body, he and Archy lifted the captain on the stretcher. Then they wrapped the great-coat around him, while Archy nearly denuded himself to cover up his master's breast and shoulders. They were about to move off when Archy saw the captain's canteen lying beside the dead Confederate, a handsome, gentle-looking boy. He took the canteen and poured a little of the brandy it still contained between his master's lips, and then bathed the gashed head with the rest, an operation the soldiers said was “a good idea,” though they mentally noted it a very wicked waste of brandy.

“Reckon the captain and that reb drank out of the same canteen last night. Bleeding makes all men friends. Some poor woman will go sooner to her grave for that boy,” pointing to Frazer. “Ned, if the captain gits well, I’ll bet five dollars he’d like to know where that boy’s covered in.”

Ned was of the same opinion, and agreed they should return to bury Frazer by himself.

Archy did not shiver in the cold rain, though with only a shirt upon his breast and shoulders. He took the heavy end of the stretcher, and told the soldiers, “I’ll keer fur this, please God, if you two’ll tote the res’, if I’ve got to walk all day.”

About five hundred yards down the river, near the ruins of the burned bridge, they found an ambulance with a representative of the Sanitary Commission, a kind-hearted young clergyman. He helped them to take off the wet, bloody garments, and replaced them with dry ones, shaking his head as he did so, and murmuring his fears that their labor was useless.

“Oh, no, mauss. Don’t say dat. Mauss Robut’s so good an’ l.ave. What’d de war do if he died?” and Archy bathed the head while the young clergyman applied some restoratives. The detail remained till they saw the first quiver of returning life on the bloody lips. Then they donned their overcoats, and went again to their painful duty.

The ambulance started back with Archy inside, trying, as he knelt, to ease the jarring as they passed over the ruts, and to keep the covering around his master’s form. During this ride, as he afterward expressed it, he “had a fearful struggle wid de Lor’ fur de life ob Mauss Robut.” He supplicated Heaven if

a life was necessary to take his, and "spare de young mauss." Past dismantled guns and dismembered wagons, by long trenches with their rows of dead, and at last the ambulance stopped before a large tent, inside of which a number of doctors, covered with blood, stood around an amputating table, looking, in the misty light, like savage butchers.

"Where must I take this man?" asked the driver.

One of the doctors stepped quickly out, and, mounting the ambulance, pushed Archy aside, while he cut open the vest the young clergyman had put on the wounded man. He examined the wound, felt behind for the exit of the ball, listened to the faint beating of the heart, counted the languid pulsations at the wrist, and then, covering up the terrible hole with the blanket, he said, as he descended from the ambulance:

"It does not make much difference where you go; that man can't live. The wonder is that he shows any signs of life."

Archy was usually gentle as a child in his manner, but the words of the doctor nettled him, and in an excited tone he put his head out of the ambulance and shouted after the retreating doctor:

"I do n't believe yeh know nothin'; Mauss Røbut will live in spite of yeh."

"What is your master's name?" asked a doctor, who seemed to be directing the operations inside the tent.

"Warren, sah—Captain Robert Warren," said Archy, in a pleading tone.

The doctor gave a few hurried instructions to those inside, then sprang into the ambulance, and, looking

at the death-like face, in a tone that won Archy's heart he said:

"Poor Warren, they have struck close to your great warm heart."

Then he gave the driver directions, and, as they rolled over the ground to a plantation in the distance, Archy told Doctor Hatchett where he had found his master, and as he concluded he took the doctor's hand and said, in a voice he always assumed when praying:

"Please tell me he'll lib, doctah! Jes' say so once!"

"I cannot promise that, boy. But he is a strong man. His pulse is improving. Wonder he has a drop of blood left. By the way, boy, did you know Tennessee?"

"Tennessee!" echoed Archy. "Well, mauss, I jes' reckon I knowed Tennessee. He wuz our frien', shuah. Do n't 'spose we'll eber see 'im agin."

"Yes, boy, *you* will, no doubt, see him again. I would pronounce the captain's wound fatal were it not for the miraculous recovery of that man Tennessee."

"De Lor' is workin' miracles now as in de days ob de pillah ob fiah," said Archy, reverently.

"Yes, boy, without His watchful care I fear it would be dark indeed."

As the doctor ceased speaking the ambulance stopped before a large house, on the gallery of which a number of officers, with arms in slings or wounded about the head, were lamenting the noble Sill and chivalrous Garasché. They gathered to see the new arrival, and an assistant came with a stretcher to help

Archy in with the body. There were kind words and expressions of sorrow from the soldiers, who for the time forgot their own wounds.

"He got it in front," said one.

"Wonder he did n't die on the field last night. It makes me shiver to think how he suffered," said another; while a third, looking for an instant at the face, said:

"By Heaven, men, that's Warren. That's the chap I spoke about. It made my hair rise to see him fly at those Texans. I saw him fall, and I believe that's all I did see afterwards."

"You got knocked about that time, eh, cap?" said a comrade, laughing and looking at the bandaged head of his friend.

"Yes, I saw more stars in daylight than if I had a couple of Ross's telescopes to my eyes."

In the meantime Robert was carried into a room and placed upon a clean cot. The doctor gave directions in such a way that their execution followed at once. Archy and an assistant bathed the limbs in warm water, while the doctor forced some fluid between the teeth, and after that the wounded man made an effort at swallowing. Then the wound in the head was dressed and the black hair cut close.

"There is no use in probing for that ball at present," said Doctor Hatchett. "We must stimulate him first." This was said after the doctor had inserted a probe so deep that Archy turned aside and groaned as if the instrument had been buried in his own breast. Indeed, had it been, the pain would have been easier to bear.

The doctor, giving instructions to the assistant

surgeon in charge of the building, left, promising to return in a few hours. Archy could not resist saying:

“May de God ob Israel bless dat 'ar doctah.” Then he sat bathing the feet and moistening the cloths upon his master's breast, watching every quiver of the eyelid, counting every breath, and at times laying his hand on the wrist, though in utter ignorance of the pulse, as if the act had some healing power.

Toward noon the painful breathing and gasping increased in strength, and by the time the doctor returned the captain began to mutter, at first indistinctly. At last, in a painful whisper, he called, “Archy! Archy!”

“Yes, yes, Mauss Robut,” said the kind fellow, bending in anxiety beside the cot.

“It was n't Don's fault, Archy.”

“No, Mauss Robut; it wuz de rebels.”

The captain muttered again for a few minutes, then he articulated:

“Richardson, bury Frazer. Poor fellow! his mother. My poor mother!”

In the afternoon they carried the cot near the light, and Archy became nervous as he saw the array of glistening probes and long, keen knives the doctor unpacked.

“You must leave the room, boy, till we have dressed this wound,” said Doctor Hatchett, looking into Archy's troubled face.

“Please led me stay, mauss. I'll say noffin'. He'd led me if he knowed,” pleaded Archy, pointing to his master.

“I would let you remain, but I am afraid you may

get noisy," said the doctor, still sorting his instruments and arranging plaster and bandages.

"I'll be quiet as a chile," said Archy.

The doctor smiled. "You may stay, boy, but if you make one-tenth the noise my children do sometimes you'll go."

"Yes, mauss, out I'll go," repeated Archy in his anxious, softened voice.

With a steady hand the doctor cleaned out the path of the bullet—pieces of clothing, torn flesh, and fragments of bone—nodding to his attendant at times, who in response to the signal would pour some stimulant into the wounded man's mouth. After working with an anxious face for some time the doctor stopped with the long, shining probe buried in the wound, and said :

"Doctor Newton, just feel that ; the ball is flattened and fast to the ribs. It will be impossible to cut it there and withdraw it. The orifice is too small to do it without."

Doctor Newton sounded, placing his hand under the captain's shoulder, and soon came to the same conclusion.

"It might have been extracted last night, but I think the lung is not in condition now,"

"Please tell me, doctah, Mauss Robert ain't a-goin' to die."

"Here, did n't you promise to make no noise," said the doctor.

"Yes, sah, I'll be still ; I'll say noffin'," said Archy, struggling to keep down the tears.

The wound was dressed, and the captain's cot moved back to the corner. His breathing seemed easier, and the expression of pain gradually passed away from his

face. The doctor had Archy provided for, and giving him the captain's time-piece, he told him to watch for three hours, and to call Doctor Newton if the captain seemed uneasy. After the three hours, Archy, who had been up all the previous night, was to have some rest.

Poor fellow, he was not conscious of fatigue or hunger. His whole soul was absorbed in watching the ashy face of his master, and had Doctor Newton been called every time Archy felt like doing so, the young surgeon would have been busy running in and out all the time.

Four days passed, the captain showing occasional moments of consciousness. Night and day Archy remained by the cot watching every motion, and flying to execute every command that affected his master. Doctor Hatchett and his assistant were constant in their attentions, fanning the feeble flame of life through the long anxious nights, and guarding against the fever they dreaded.

Doctor Hatchett came in the fifth morning, looking very pale from some cause other than his labors; Archy heard him whisper in the hall to Doctor Newton:

“We must send back all able to bear transportation, as the gangrene is spreading.”

Archy's eyes expanded, and he drew a long breath as he whispered to himself, wonderingly, “De gangring! some ob Wharton's men, I reckon.”

Something more terrible, more dreaded than Wharton's men was coming to the camp. It came to many a cot in the dead of night, where the soldier lay suffering with mangled limb, or torn breast, or gashed

head, and suddenly this child of death, gangrene, seized in its slimy hands the fevered scar, and at the cold touch the fever and the pain fled, and the strong men sighed in very comfort, and sat up with smiling faces, and joked about their condition, and exchanged congratulations at feeling so well. Deeper into the limb the painless scar sank, over a wider space of breast the bullet-hole stretched, nearer to the brain the scalp wound deepened, and the men wondered at the alarmed faces of the surgeons, growled at the burning caustics that brought back more than the old pain, and felt easy when the burning ceased, and the cold, slimy hand grasped nearer the vitals. At last it seized in the midnight an artery in the limb, and the soldier sank clamly to sleep. The cold hand touched the heart and chilled it—passed through the fracture in the scalp, and gangrene surrendered its victims to its father, Death.

“I think,” said Doctor Newton, “we can get all off excepting Captain Warren. It would be very dangerous to move him now.”

“It would be more dangerous to let him remain. We must start him back to Nashville this very day,” said Dr. Hatchett, walking into the room where the captain, pale and breathing with so much difficulty, lay.

The doctor was in earnest, and that afternoon he secured a detail of strong fellows to carry the captain to Nashville, fearing to trust him to the jolting of an ambulance. Doctor Newton accompanied the captain to Nashville, stopping at times for days at one of the many extemporized hospitals along the road. Don would have galloped the distance between Stone River

and Nashville in a few hours; it took one week to carry the captain there. Nashville was filled with wounded, though many able to bear transportation were sent North. Doctor Hatchett was in Nashville by the time the captain reached there, and had made arrangements to receive him in a private house.

Long days of fear and doubt rolled past, with faint flickerings of reason—an ebb and flow of strength. The captain lay unconscious in the white cot, heeding not the soft footsteps, feeling not the gentle hand which smoothed his pillow and ministered to his wants. Archy was ever near him, a look of quiet satisfaction on his face as he watched the graceful form of the young woman moving noiselessly around his master's bed like an angel unwearied in doing good.

Strange as it may seem the wound from which the captain suffered most was the cut in his head received in falling from his horse. A consultation disclosed the fact that the skull was injured, and an operation followed which relieved the pressure on the brain, and Robert Warren woke to the world, and remembered only between his fall and his waking that cold night of rain and fog and sleet, when young Frazer died by his side, calling him friend.

The doctors announced to Archy and the young nurse the return of reason, and while they permitted Archy to enter at will, they enjoined on the pale girl that she must only see the patient when he slept, and under no temptation to speak while in the captain's room.

As Archy entered, shortly after the doctors left, he saw a smile on his master's face, and the once powerful hand, now so white and thin, was extended.

“How are you, Archy, old boy? Sit down. How did I get here?”

Archy took the poor hand between his own, and while tears of joy streamed down his face he said, in a voice as low and tender as a pure woman's:

“Tank de good Lor', Mauss Robut. Sing praises to His name, fur yeh's agwine to lib again.”

“Well, Archy, I can't sing, but surely I have not been dead for any time, have I?”

Archy became more serious as he remembered the doctors' censure about talking.

“Stop, Mauss Robut, yeh musn't say anodder word. Yeh's got to hush right up. Tank de Lor' ob Israel, yeh's a libin'. Dar, do n't yeh move; can't 'low dat, no how. Yeh've got to sleep, an' may de Lor' an' de angels guard yeh wid dar shaddery wings.”

The captain closed his eyes and turned his face on the pillow, while his heart, filled with a brother's love for the brave man by his side, could not hold back the tears that rose up and flowed quietly and unobserved by the black down the pale face.

A few days afterward, as the captain lay in a semi-conscious state, peculiar to invalids, his eyes slightly open, he felt a gentle hand on his forehead, and again and again a soft cheek pressed his. He could not rouse himself, but as the slender form, like a lost sunbeam, moved about the darkened room, his uncertain gaze followed it. He tried to remember where he had seen her, and as she bowed her beautiful head to speak to Archy sitting on the foot of the bed, he recognized the voice and heard the very words:

“Archy, you must call on Lieutenant Richardson with my compliments. Tell him his present of fruit

and flowers was most acceptable, and that I am very sorry that brother Robert is not strong enough to see him for a few days."

"I'll go right off, Miss Mary," said Archy, rising, a look of devotion on his black face as he turned it toward the girl.

The stupor fled; the eyes of the wounded soldier opened wide, and they drank in with rapture the vision before them.

"My sister—my brave little Mary!"

She heard him, and her yearning heart, that had longed so much for a word of recognition, leaped with joy, and, forgetting the sage advice of the men of science, her white arms were around her brother and the happiest tears ever shed fell on Robert Warren's face.

"Oh, Robert! My own brave, noble brother. God knows this moment repays me for all," she murmured as she laid her arm so gently across the bullet-scarred breast.

Robert raised the pale, sweet face and looked on it till his eyes were feasted and his heart was glad. Then he kissed her again, as he said:

"**And my little sister is living after all. And she did not die in prison?**"

"No, brother Robert. I left home to nurse you, and I am rewarded."

"I do n't feel the animosity I did to Wheeler's men after all for wounding me ——"

The captain would have gone on speaking, but at this moment Doctor Newton entered the room, and in a tone of much severity said:

"Miss Warren, this conduct is unpardonable. What

will my brother-in-law, the lieutenant, say? There, you may kiss the captain once more, and then I will let you go."

The doctor held up a warning finger, and Mary, her face glowing with happiness, left the room.

Though the doctor had been with Robert every day for two weeks, he had to introduce himself as a man he had met for the first time.

It was a time of wonders and miracles, when no event, no matter how extraordinary, surprised men, and no cure was attributed to mere surgical skill. Captain Warren had seen enough of war to be prepared for any circumstance that might surround him. He was not astonished to know that Doctor Newton had attended him under the advice of Doctor Hatchett for two weeks. Had it been two months or two years it would not have created wonder, for he had known of things more extraordinary, and before his wound he had lived for nearly two years surrounded by scenes more calculated to create surprise. He loved the cool, brave Richardson, the man who knew nothing beyond duty and obedience, who lived for the one object of country, and who valued his life as nothing to accomplish his purpose. He felt a thrill of pride when he learned from Doctor Newton that the daring lieutenant had been shot down in the vain effort to recover the body of his leader, Captain Warren, and he consoled himself with the thought that he would have done the same to save Richardson were he in danger during that terrible battle of Stone River. Men soon learn what they would do for a friend, and the acts of that friend may arouse gratitude, but not surprise. The captain was sorry to hear of the broken

leg and the death of Richardson's favorite horse, but he forgot all about himself in the thought that Richardson suffered in the line of duty. *Duty!* How soon a soldier learns that name, looking upon it as a synonym for friendship, courage, honor, and patriotism, forgetting in its very name the impulse that made himself to be a soldier.

Robert listened with delight to Doctor Newton's praise of his sister. He could not say enough in commendation of the noble girl, and he encouraged him to dwell on a subject so gratifying.

The doctor was mysterious, not in a professional sense, for he knew Captain Warren cared not a fig for that great person, Death—men soon grow familiar with cross-bones and skull—but he alluded to Lieutenant Richardson in a way that brought up long-forgotten incidents to the mind of the wounded man—days of peace and quiet, when returning from the hunt, he had seen Mary on the gallery sitting close to one whom he then loved, but since despised; and he contrasted the tall, handsome rebel with the cool, polished Richardson, the man of principle and duty—the soldier who dared to do what his conscience taught him was right.

No men reason like soldiers. War sharpens every faculty, and as Robert Warren turned his gashed head and felt the heavy incubus on his once powerful heart, he forgot wounds and pain, and saw his sister under the influence of Richardson. He did not need the soft words of the good doctor; instinctively he understood the situation.

The doctor left, congratulating the captain on his wonderful recovery and promising to call early on the morrow.

The morrow came, with the doctor near the captain, accompanied by Surgeon Hatchett, whom Robert at once gratefully recognized, and Mary, sitting at the head of the bed with the once strong hand sandwiched between her own, so soft and womanly.

Doctor Hatchett was more impulsive than Newton, who imitated the cool Richardson. He felt the danger was over, and, after pressing Robert's hand, he began *de novo* and gave him a graphic sketch of his own sufferings—something Robert was blissfully ignorant of—and he closed with a record of Archy's fidelity and patience which induced the captain to call for that worthy at once.

As boys they had played and fought together. As youths they had hunted between the Brazos and Colorado. As men they had dared to do right, and had suffered together. As a lad, Archy used to call his young master "Mauss Bob," but after Robert returned from college in the North, the black man was more reserved, and used the early name only on important occasions.

As Archy entered the room where the doctors and his young mistress were, near the bed of his master, he forgot all the intervening time between youth and manhood, and, rushing to the bed, he ejaculated as he knelt beside it:

"'Fore Heaven, Mauss Bob, I's mor 'n glad yeh 's all right agin."

Robert took one of Archy's hands, and, with a shadow of the old smile on his pale, thin face, replied:

"I am equally glad to see you, Archy. Last night I did not think I would ever see a friend in this world again."

"Not las' night, I reckon, mauss," said Archy, las' night yeh wuz heah in de bed as quiet as a lamb. Why, it's mor 'n two weeks since de battle."

"Two weeks—two weeks!" Robert was going on in wonder, but Archy stopped him:

"Dar, dar, not one odder word; de doctah says yeh must n't speak. Got to min' de doctah. Tank de Lor', yeh 's all squar agin."

"It won't hurt me to hear you talk, Archy. Tell me all about Mary, and how I came here," said Robert, closing his eyes, the better to catch every expected word and as a sort of half promise that he would not talk again.

"Wall, mauss, dunno ez I kin tell yeh all. Ain't got time nohow. Got to go see Mauss Richadson."

"Lieutenant Richardson!" exclaimed Robert. "Why, where is he?" What is wrong with him?"

"Dar, yeh mus' not say no more. Why, Mauss Richadson's got a ball in de right leg. Gittin' on fuss rate. He tole me whar yeh wuz dat night, an' de Lor' knows ef I did n't sarch an' hunt fur yeh. Dar's no kinder use talkin'. It rained. Oh mighty, but it wuz cold an' rainy. Did n't 'spec to see yeh alive. An' when I foun' yeh, 'bout daylight, yeh looked ez if yeh 'd bled all out. I wuz goin' to pick yeh up an' tote yeh off, but I did n't know whar yeh wuz woun'ed, an' I did n't want ter hurt yeh."

"But you could not have hurt me, Archy, if I was dead?"

"Dat's true, Mauss Robut; but I 'pealed to de Lor', an' I kind o' heerd a voice sayin' yeh wuz n't dead, ez de good book says, but sleepin'. Den I jes' hollered, an' some sojers kum up an' we toted yeh

off. I neber felt so strong in my life ez when I wuz a holdin' on to dat 'ar stretcher."

"Well, Archy, you have been my guardian angel again," said Robert, his eyes still closed.

"No, mauss, de good Lor' sent an angel ob light to de fiel' an' guided me whar yeh wuz. Now do n't talk no more. Doctah Newton says yeh mus n't talk."

"But who is Doctor Newton, Archy?"

"Why, Mauss Robut, he 's Mauss Richadson's brudder by a marryin' ob his sister?"

"Whose sister, Archy?"

"Why, Mauss Richadson's."

"I know, but who married her?"

Archy looked down and saw a smile on his master's face, which was communicated to his own as he rose and said :

"Yeh 's jes' a foolin' of me. 'Clare to Massy, I won't say one odder word."

Robert was very anxious to have a long conversation with his sister, but the doctor was inexorable. He promised, however, to let the captain talk for a short time with Miss Warren the next day, provided he remained perfectly quiet for the present. This Robert with a more than child-like docility promised to do, while he mentally objected to the medical discipline. Still he felt easier and happier, despite his wounds, than he had done for a long time, and in his dreams the slender, girlish form seemed by his side, as she was in fact.

At ten o'clock next morning the doctor, after dressing Robert's wounds, pronounced him very much better, and, leading Mary to the side of the cot, he made her promise to do all the talking and left.

“I am very happy to have you here, little sister,” said Robert, taking her hand in his as she sat on the low camp-stool beside him. “Come, tell me all about yourself since we parted. I have been mourning you as dead.”

“I would have been, brother, had I depended on my own poor strength for support. Before I left home I did not dream that I could have endured what lay before me, and yet, after more than a year of watching for you, here I am, strong, healthy, and happy, sad only at your sufferings and the troubles of the dear ones at home.” Mary laid her hand on Robert’s forehead as she spoke, and looked into his gray eyes with such a sweet, happy face that he felt a lump in his throat and a moisture about his eyes, and he closed them to hide the evidences of his happiness.

“Go on, sister,” he murmured, pressing her hand. “I am very happy. Tell me all about yourself.”

Then Mary, in a low, soft voice, that came like music from above to the wounded man, began the story already familiar to the reader. But over the parts where she was most conspicuous she suppressed the narration of her own sufferings; but Robert knew her, and sighed as in imagination he saw the gentle girl, so unused to the world, suffering as she must have done. He knew pretty well her story down to her imprisonment at Nashville, and as she came to that part his hold on her hand tightened and he turned his head the better to catch her words.

“I felt very sorry for poor Tom. Henderson Townsend carried him off, and I presume he is with him now.”

“Never mind about Tom, sister; tell me only about yourself.”

“I felt so conscious of no intention to do wrong that I did not dread the result. It was the order of the provost marshal to put me in jail, but the lieutenant was a kind, good man—poor fellow, he died here in hospital a few days ago. He was wounded at Stone River, and I nursed him till he passed away. Well, the lieutenant found the jail was full, and got permission to take me to a private family, the Frazers, relatives of his, where I was to remain to await my trial. The people were Confederates, but exceedingly good and kind, and so honest in their convictions that while their thoughtfulness won my heart their sentiments on the war had my respect. I was with this kind family at Nashville for nearly eight weeks, when the news came of the taking of Fort Donelson. I was still untried, and knew not how to act. Mrs. Frazer thought it would be very dangerous for me to remain behind till the Federal troops, as she called them, came in, and her family decided to move down to Columbia at once. I was so utterly alone and helpless that I determined to remain for the present with the Frazers, hoping an opportunity might present itself of getting into Kentucky or communicating with you. Lieutenant Charles Frazer, of the Fifth Tennessee Cavalry, was a very fine young gentleman, and he carried at different times a half-dozen letters and left them in post-offices where they might reach you, but I presume you never got them?”

“Never,” said Robert, while he muttered, as if to remind himself: “Frazer—Frazer—Columbia—Fifth Tennessee! With Wheeler—Mary.”

“ Yes, brother.”

“ It seems like a terrible dream—the sufferings of that night when I lay wounded on the field. I heard a man groan near me and I crawled to his side. He was wounded and dying. His name was Frazer, of the Fifth Tennessee. He must have been young, for he had no beard. I gave him a drink, and he died beside me asking me to take a message to his friends at Columbia. Poor boy, he was your friend.”

“ He was, Robert,” and Mary bowed her head, and when again she raised it, her long lashes sparkled with tears of sorrow for the brave young Tennessean.

“ Go on, sister. Tell me the rest.”

Mary continued :

“ I remained with the Frazers during the spring and summer. Columbia was sometimes occupied by Union troops, sometimes by Confederates. Mr. Frazer had a place out of town, which was seldom visited by the soldiers of either side, but when I saw the Union troops I inquired for you, but could learn nothing about you. I busied myself in the meantime sewing and caring for the wounded of each side. One day, after Buell and Bragg passed south, I had a conversation with Doctor Newton, in Columbia. He was a Union surgeon, and told me if I went on to Nashville, he would secure me a position as nurse in one of the hospitals, and at the same time he would do all in his power to find you. I came on here and with all my strength I have worked to relieve the brave men who have been fighting with you. Still I tried to find you. I heard from a soldier that he had seen you at Perryville, but that being in the cavalry it would be hard to find you. About ten days ago, as I

was going to church, you may imagine my joy and surprise to see Archy coming directly toward me. Poor fellow, he was but a shadow of himself, and he was so delighted, I actually thought he would go wild. Now it seems Doctor Newton, who has been attending you all the time, knew the relation you sustained to me, but knowing you were desperately wounded, he kept the secret. However, I sought him out with Archy; that cunning fellow would not take me to you first. The doctor was of course surprised; he had given me charge, a day or two before, of Lieutenant Richardson, but that gentleman, though one of your officers, was as mute as a sea-turtle, though he knew who I was. And when I inquired about you, as I did from everybody, the lieutenant actually fibbed. But then he is such a good, noble fellow." This was said with so much earnestness that Robert opened his eyes, looked at the blushing face of his sister, and said:

"So you really think Richardson is a good fellow?"

Without appearing to notice the interruption, Mary hurried on.

"Doctor Newton agreed to let me see you and nurse you on condition that I should never talk in the room, and that Archy should always ascertain if you were conscious before I entered. Of course, dear brother, I complied," said Mary as she stooped and kissed him; then added, "I will not tire you with the rest, you can imagine it."

She had hardly concluded when in walked Doctor Newton. Robert reached out his hand and thanked him for his kindness to himself and sister, but the doctor playfully informed him he must not talk,

adding, "If you remain quiet till to-morrow, captain, I have another agreeable surprise in store for you."

"I will be mute as a mouse, doctor, but I should like to see Richardson," said the captain.

"I have promised Albert to let him try his crutches in a few days, if he behaves. Then you can see him.

Robert acquiesced, though he felt strong enough in his own opinion to respond to "boots and saddles" in the time it would take him to dress.

The doctor, for reasons best known to himself, did not produce the promised agreeable surprise on the following day; but on the one succeeding, after dressing the captain's rapidly-healing wounds, he went out and soon returned, escorting in Gaines, Tennessee, Old Dawn, and Arkansas. Gaines walked a little lame, but in other respects he looked well, while Tennessee seemed himself again, excepting that his yellow hair and beard were shorter than he was accustomed to wear them.

The joy of all was unbounded at this meeting, and only the doctor's presence prevented Robert from getting up and explaining all about himself to "the boys" while he made inquiries as to the state of their wounds.

The interview was short, but the doctor assured Robert he could see the men again before they went to the front, for which they were then en route.

Two weeks rolled past, during which time Robert grew daily stronger, and was permitted to dress and sit up for a few hours every afternoon. Gaines with the rest of the men had gone down the Mississippi, being ordered to join Sherman, then on the Yazoo. Richardson was still on crutches, and never let two

hours elapse without coming to see the captain when he was awake. The lieutenant's manner seemed very much changed. He was no longer reserved. He was more than usually kind, and when Mary was present his voice softened and the expression of his face changed. Robert had his suspicions, but prudently kept them to himself. One day after he had grown so strong that he applied for a hospital discharge, and when Richardson had thrown away his crutches, Mary, who knew her brother would soon leave, reminded him about removing Lieutenant Frazer's remains to Columbia, he having previously learned where the Tennessean was buried. After Robert had promised this, Mary was silent for some time. There was evidently something on her mind which she wished to communicate to her brother. Robert knew this, and it was cruel in him not to help her. At length she mustered up courage, and pulling her chair close to his she took one of his hands in hers.

“Brother Robert.”

“Yes, sister Mary.”

Robert was smoking, and blew a cloud toward the ceiling in which direction his face was turned.

“You and Lieutenant Richardson will be together after you leave?”

“I hope so, sister.”

“Brother Robert, would you object to my writing to Lieutenant Richardson. You know he will be very lonely down by that miserable river near Vicksburg.”

“Yes, sister, I will let him read the letters you send me; I hope to get one, at least, every week.”

“You do n't think I ought to write to him, then?”

“I do not wish to create that impression, Mary.

Has the lieutenant asked you to write?"

"Why, of course, or I would not do it."

"Then, my darling little sister, if it will make you and Richardson happier to write to each other, do so by all means." Robert drew her closer to him, and laying aside his pipe he looked kindly into her half-frightened eyes.

"Mary, the lieutenant loves you—I have thought so for a long time. Tell me, what are your feelings toward him?"

"I do not know, Robert," said Mary, nestling closer to the broad chest. "I respect him very much. He is so noble and brave, and seems to be nearer to you than some brothers. I cannot help feeling a more than usual interest in him."

"I do not wonder at that, Mary. Richardson is one of the few thoroughly good men I ever met; and, withal, he is positive. I like positive men."

"So do I, brother Robert."

"Very well; I love my litter sister so much, and have such confidence in her heart and good sense, that whatever she does is right to me." Robert kissed her, and rising as he concluded he walked out, leaving her heart full of happiness.

A few days after this, and the captain and his lieutenant went south to the Yazoo, while Mary remained behind, an angel in the hospital.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

“THE CITY OF AN HUNDRED HILLS.”

“The Yankees might take Richmond,” but, with a romantic oath, Pemberton said “they could not take Vicksburg;” and the Southern people believed this with good reason. In the early spring of '63 Davis had been there, and in a speech to the garrison pronounced the place impregnable. He said “the combined armies of Yankeedom” could not take Vicksburg “with such defenders, provided they had provisions.” Then Pemberton vowed that if Vicksburg were besieged it would only surrender “when the last mule and rat had been eaten, and the last cartridge fired by the last man.” This sounded well, and those who subsequently denounced Pemberton as “a traitor to the South” applauded to the skies.

Some philosopher has said “there is no such thing as an absolute falsehood.” It might be added, “There are grounds for every earnest assertion.” The Southern people were given to overestimate themselves, and underestimate their opponents; still they had strong reasons for voting Vicksburg impregnable. From its southern batteries Butler and Porter had been sent flying down the river, while Sherman and McClelland had assaulted its northern defenses on the Yazoo only to be repulsed. Even the former attempt of General Grant to reach Jackson from Grenada proved a complete failure.

When Grant assumed command of the Army of the Mississippi in the early spring of '63, he illustrated the truth of the adage that "Where there's a will there's a way." Butler's canal, intended to turn the channel of the Mississippi and leave Vicksburg "high and dry," was a failure, and in the spring of the year named its stagnant waters were the paradise of frogs, while the Mississippi in a grand sweep rolled up against the cliffs and hills of Vicksburg.

Robert Warren was glad to be transferred with his men to the Army of the Mississippi. It seemed like getting nearer his home when he scouted in the woods of Louisiana below Vicksburg, in which State two years before he had been a hunted fugitive. Gaines and Tennessee were with him, as was Archy, and he hoped for the day when they could all go back to the Caddo Lakes again and look upon the scene of the terrible storm of March two years before.

It required a great deal of nerve to run the batteries before Vicksburg with steamers. Yet hundreds of brave men, acquainted with the bend, were ready to volunteer. Although several steamers were destroyed in their efforts to pass, enough got through for General Grant's purpose. Down the west bank of the river to Bruinsboro' the Army marched, and the steamers were there to ferry the troops across before the enemy was aware of Grant's purpose. Defeat to the Union troops at this time would have been ruin, but to defeat that army would have been to annihilate it. Every man appreciated the position, and felt as if the success of the campaign depended on his own exertions. At Grand Gulf Pemberton was met, but it was only to hurl him back from the Mississippi to

Port Gibson on the Bayou Perè. At Port Gibson, the most beautiful town in the South, Pemberton threw himself in Grant's path; but the opposition he offered hardly checked the rapid advance of the men bound for Vicksburg. Raymond, Champion Hills, Jackson, and the Big Black offered but points for a temporary resistance. Pemberton's army, weakened by the loss of Loring, who was cut off by the Union Army, was driven into Vicksburg, and Grant's triumphant legions encamped before it, first feeling its gigantic works by a bloody and fruitless assault, then opening up communications with the North by way of Milliken's Bend and the Yazoo.

Captain Warren's duties during this time were of the most arduous kind. The Union Army was between two forces, viz., Pemberton in Vicksburg and Johnston at Jackson. An attack from both simultaneously would have been disastrous, and it required the utmost vigilance to prevent concert of action between the rebel generals.

In the early June Captain Warren was instructed to take a few men, including a telegraph operator, pass north between Canton and Jackson, tap the wires between the latter place and Brandon, and ascertain by every means the condition and strength of General Joe Johnston's army. It was an easy matter to obtain passes with the name of any Southern general on, in this case with the signature of General Johnston, so as to use them if necessary.

At the time of the advance on Jackson, the Union Cavalry destroyed the railroad and telegraph wires east of Jackson to Pearl River, where they burned the bridge. It had been ascertained that neither the

railroad nor wires had been repaired by Johnston, so that all dispatches for the east had to be sent by courier to Brandon, beyond the river, from which point stores for the Army went west by wagon.

To reach Pearl River by the route laid down required two days of hard riding, by unfrequented roads and across that portion of the country less apt to be traversed by the scouting or foraging parties of the enemy.

The evening of the second day they struck the river north of what they learned was the Brandon Ferry, and in a pine wood they went into camp. Captain Warren, Richardson, Tennessee, and a telegraph operator named Sailor, formerly of Dayton, Ohio, comprised the party. Sailor was familiar with the cypher used by the enemy at this time, though he was completely ignorant of that used by the commanding officer of his own army. Up to this time they had met detached squads of the enemy without exciting suspicion. Indeed, from some of them Captain Warren learned much of importance relative to Johnston's army.

After going into camp, Tennessee was sent down near the road with instructions to watch for the couriers, who would be known by their dress and satchel, but by no means to halt any other person. They built no fire and all stood their watch, including the captain. Just before daylight Tennessee was on again, and before half an hour he came into camp conducting a young man who proved to be a courier going to Brandon with dispatches for Richmond. He was a handsome fellow, and wore a look of profound astonishment at his arrest by men whom he supposed to be friends.

“Why do you detain me, sir?” he asked, addressing himself to Robert, whom he recognized from his manner as the leader of the party.

Moving further into the woods, Robert struck a light and ordered the courier to take off his satchel.

“I protest, sir, against this treatment,” said the courier. “I have dispatches of importance, and I promised to get them to Brandon early this morning. Here are my papers; you can see I am permitted to pass and repass all pickets and guards without detention.”

“I do not doubt but your papers, under other circumstances, would pass you to and from Brandon, but where I come from they would be useless,” said the captain.

“What!” exclaimed the courier in amazement, “are you Yankees?”

“We are, sir, and you are our prisoner,” was the reply.

The courier on hearing this sat down and wept like a child.

“You have done your duty,” said Robert, laying his hand on the courier’s shoulder, “and are not to blame for what is a fortune of war. In one hour I intend starting for Vicksburg. Our saddle-bags are filled with percussion caps for Pemberton’s men.”

The courier looked up in wonder, while Robert continued: “I wish I had these papers without you. I cannot parole you. It is nearly impossible to take you through with me. I do not know what to do with you.”

“I do, sir!” said the courier, rising hastily. “Here, shoot me! for I do not want to live under a disgrace.”

“I regret that war should make me the foe of so brave a man,” said the captain, “but you see my position, and you know the law about self-preservation?”

“I do, sir. I expect what I desire—death. Last night I agreed with my horse to take those dispatches for General Johnston two hours shorter than his best courier. Now I am a prisoner and the blame will be on me.”

Robert walked aside and consulted with Richardson for a few minutes, then came back.

“If you agree to my plan,” he said, addressing the prisoner, “I will promise that before forty-eight hours General Johnston learns all about your gallant conduct and the manner of your capture. In giving your reply to me, consider well the importance of your word, and before giving a negative think of those at home who are dear to you. I cannot parole you. If you will submit to being disguised and will pledge that you will make no attempt at escape till we reach the Big Black, I will take you through and release you there. If you do not agree to this you court your own death to save the lives of your enemies.”

The courier held down his head for a few minutes, weighing the, to him, all-important question of life or death. He made up his mind, and rising, he extended his hand to the captain.

“I will go with you, sir, for my mother’s sake, if you promise to send a letter from some point before reaching your lines to General Johnston.”

“I shall certainly do so,” said Robert, and he had hardly finished speaking before a bugle sounded near the ferry, and Tennessee hastened back to say a regi-

ment of cavalry was moving in the direction of Jackson.

They waited till the regiment had a good start ahead, then Richardson changed the appearance of the courier by making him exchange clothes and putting a huge pair of brown whiskers on the smooth, boyish face. In the meantime Tennessee put his own equipments on the courier's horse, after he had darkened the white star on the beautiful animal's head, and trimmed very closely the flowing tail and mane.

Before starting Sailor had read the cipher, and it, with the rest of the papers found on the person of the courier, was destroyed. As they rode along, taking a route south of Jackson in the direction of Crystal Springs, Sailor informed Robert that one of the dispatches read: "It would be imprudent to cross the Big Black with twenty thousand men and no artillery." This was addressed to "President Davis, Richmond, Va."

"This is all he wants to know. I think the general will smoke without much concern after hearing that," said Robert.

"Yes, if we only gits to give him the news without bein' onpleasantly interfered with on the way," said Tennessee, dryly, and with a queer twinkle in his blue eyes that looked like a smile, but meant anxiety.

"Half the work is over, Tennessee," said Robert. "Though we will have ridden over two hundred miles to secure a few words, they will be worth a corps to Grant, and we must get them to him."

The country through which they passed returning was a little better than the one by which they had come. The soil was light, and forests of pine, with

an undergrowth of fan palm and huge ferns, lined the road for much of the distance. Here and there was to be seen a clearing, with fields of cotton or corn surrounding the pretentious "white folks' house" and log cabins of the negroes. Now and then a blacksmith's shop by the roadside, surrounded by crippled wagons, and occasionally a negro driving unconcernedly his double mule-team, were the only objects that broke the monotony of the undulating country between the ferry at Pearl River and Crystal Springs. Near the latter place, early in the evening, the scouts went into camp some distance from the road, while Robert rode into town, or rather into the pleasant little village, to obtain supplies and learn what he could about the enemy. As he expected, there were no troops stationed there, but there were many soldiers on leave and furlough lounging about the tavern. It was wonderful to think of the liberality of the Southern officers with their men. In '63 every male from sixteen to sixty was looked on as a soldier, and two-thirds of their number would have outnumbered the Union Army at any time, but they straggled, got off on slight pretexts, and with an utter lack of interest in their cause they left the fighting to the minority, and stood ready to demand the glory if the South was successful. And as a rule these skulkers were the men who, on the agitation of secession, were loudest in their demands for separation, and through the war bitterest in their denunciations of the North. Only the devoted heroism of the minority that did fight can give to the Southern people a claim for patriotic self-denial.

Crystal Springs, though not made up of planters'

residences, as is Port Gibson, is still a very pretty village for that latitude, with more evidences of home comfort than are usually to be met with in Southern towns. Robert spent an hour very profitably in the place, and while there he wrote and posted a letter to the officer commanding the Confederate forces at Jackson, explaining the capture of the courier. This he did with a feeling of safety, as he hoped to be in Vicksburg in twenty-four hours, or before the mail would start from the Springs.

Returning to camp Robert formed the reliefs, with orders to keep a strict watch over the prisoner, though, as it proved, the word of the courier first given was a sufficient guarantee for his conduct.

Early next morning the scouts were in the saddle. Fifty miles lay between them and Vicksburg, with the Big Black to swim and the rebel scouts east of it to elude. All went well until two in the afternoon, when Robert, on ascending a slope, saw ahead on the road a large body of Confederate cavalry, half hidden in the cloud of dust it raised, advancing toward him. He determined to ride on, and without halting he posted the scouts to break and make for Vicksburg in case of discovery. Instructing Tennessee to watch the prisoner, he and Richardson rode ahead some distance. The officer in command of the cavalry was some distance ahead of the line with his staff, and as Robert approached he called out:

“Halt, there! which way are you going, sir?” at the same time he dispatched an officer to stop the column.

“I am going to Vicksburg, sir,” replied Robert.

“The h—l you are! What do you intend doing

there?" asked the officer in a tone of incredulity and surprise.

"Read that, sir," said Robert, handing the officer a note as he turned and with his hand halted his little band.

The officer, judging from the time his eyes were on the paper, must have read it over half a dozen times.

"'Captain Warren,'" he muttered, as if criticising the paper in his hand, "'going to Vicksburg with caps, is to go back and report to Johnston'—Pemberton's signature, sure." Then glancing at the captain with a look of admiration he said: "Young man, do n't you know you are playing a terrible game?—going on a d—d desperate enterprisè?"

"I know it, sir," replied the captain; "but we are d—d desperate men!"

"Spoken like a hero, by the Gods! Give me your hand, Captain Warren. My name is Scott, Colonel Scott," said the officer, seizing the captain's hand.

"Oh, I think," said the captain, "I met you in Kentucky last summer, with Bragg?" said Robert, inquiringly.

The colonel laughed.

"You are very near right, captain. I was in there with Kirby Smith, who is now at Shreveport, and a gallant officer."

"Yes, we were all mixed up there for a while, so that I am excusable for mistaking the army you were attached to."

"Perfectly excusable, captain, about the army. One thing you could not mistake—the cause I was attached to. We were under the same flag."

"We were under the same flag," repeated the cap-

tain, with an emphasis whose full meaning Colonel Scott did not then know.

“By the way, colonel, what are the chances for Vicksburg?” asked Robert, determined to direct the current of their conversation.

“D—n poor, captain. I think, however, the place cannot be carried by assault. Our only fear, between us, is Pemberton. Pemberton, you know, is a Yankee, and, curse them! I do not trust them, even when they have sworn to protect our flag. We hope to strengthen Johnston so as to warrant his crossing the Big Black. At the same time we are annoying the Yankee outposts, and bothering them like the devil with our light artillery on the river. I am now on the way to join an expedition for Yazoo City. There are a lot of smoked Yankees [negroes] there, and before two days we will make them wish themselves back in slavery.”

“I wish you a deserved success, colonel.”

“I know that, captain. Now draw your men aside and let me pass, and when the war is over come and see me, at Cahaba, Alabama. Good bye! God bless you, old fellow.”

Robert clasped the brave fellow's hand warmly, and drew his men in line along the roadside, where all, including the young courier, saluted Colonel Scott and his command as it passed.

The scouts breathed easier as the last Confederate passed, and the moving column of dust told them they were out of immediate danger.

An hour's ride took them to the Big Black, where Robert returned the courier his horse, much to Tennessee's disgust, and thanking him for the honor he had displayed, he told him he was at liberty to return.

The courier before leaving expressed, in a feeling way, his admiration for the men who could risk so much for their cause. "Before I met you, Captain Warren, I looked upon your army as a set of mercenary hirelings. Henceforth I will believe there are brave men in it willing to risk all for what they consider duty."

"Our army has but few men who would not do what I am willing to for the Union, and after we pass away, three millions of men, equally earnest, are ready to take our places. Tell this to your friends, and help to bring about peace."

The young man gave no reply, but, shaking hands with all, he rode slowly back, looking behind him at times, till he saw the dripping horsemen emerge on the west bank of the Big Black, then he shook his bridle, and with his dashing horse was soon lost beyond the slope.

Before the sun went down the scouts had reported, and Grant tightened his hold on Vicksburg, without a fear of the army at Jackson. Two days after this there was an attack on Yazoo City, but there were more than "smoked Yankees" to meet the rebels, and one Yankee outpost was prepared for the intended surprise.

It would thrill, even now, to recall the story of that glorious siege. The bloody assaults of the besiegers, the reckless sorties of the besieged; the mine and attack, and the daily approach of the inflexible lines and ubiquitous gunboats; the nights when the fiery path of signal lights and screeching shells from the river and the land showed there was no rest for the determined army till its mission was complete. July

4th, most auspicious of days, came around, and with it the white flags, and the silenced forts, and Pemberton's thirty-five thousand men, with artillery parked and arms grounded, and the banner of the Union floating over all. Bravely and well the garrison of Vicksburg fought; but the silly boast of the last man, last cartridge, last mule, and last rat was not carried out. They "lived to fight another day," the majority without being exchanged.

And the night of the 4th saw Burnside's men on the road to Jackson, from which Johnston was hurled back before he knew that Vicksburg had fallen.

The day after the siege the captain received a letter from Mary, saying that Addison was wounded and a prisoner at Nashville. In a sweet, womanly way she regretted the suffering of the man once so dear to her, and deplored the military order which was to send him to Camp Douglas when strong enough to move. "He was very destitute when brought in," she said, "and it did my heart good to be able to care for him, and, without wounding his pride, to give him the means of purchasing little trifles, which he will not crave for if he has money. The old feeling died long ago; but, thank God, the theory of woman's love turning to hate does not apply to my case. Now that he has fought so bravely, I would not have him change if I could; but I pray that his heart may be opened.

"You must be careful of yourself, my brother; for remember the happiness of more than your little sister depends on your safe return. I shall write often, and would make this longer, but a lot of my 'boys' are at the door, and I hear the clatter of

crutches coming up behind me. Sometimes I read for them. I have *love* letters to write for them daily, and I have become an expert at the games of 'Old Maid' and 'Muggings.' I play the latter game very often with a dear little sergeant. Poor boy! he was badly wounded with Rosecrans; but he looks so good and happy, even with his sufferings, that he reminds me of you, and I call him 'my little brother,' while at the same time I ask God to bless that big brother at the front and return him in safety to his

"Affectionate sister,

MARY."

A look of pride and intense satisfaction came over the bronzed face of the soldier as he read this letter, so indicative of self-denial from the once child of luxury and ease. With the letter held in his hand as he sat before the camp-fire, he thought to himself of the noble influence exercised by such women on the war, and the good done by the ministering angels, who gave up home and comfort for trial and hardship to carry out their love for their country and race. God placed her so high and made her so pure that her fall, if it comes, is great, and the stain is more indelible than in the case of less sensitive man. The merits of the Union and Southern causes could at any time be seen, by one disinterested, in the action of the women of each section. To the North, charity, mercy, and patriotism were the ruling emotions. To the South, patriotism, incited by hate; but mercy was dead in the hearts of women who would poison water in the path of their foes; who would cast off the wounded wretch that crawled to her doorstep for rest, and taunt and insult him in his very helplessness. In the South the smile of a woman with rebel sympa-

thies was never seen in the hospitals where northern wounded lay ; and the dwellers in the prison-pens will all remember some woman who saw their sufferings to gloat over their misery.

If in the unseen world there be an intermediate state, there will be but few spirits of women there. Purgatory is the abode of the indifferent. Who ever heard of such a woman? Among the pleasing recollections of those days is that of the women of the North, who, by presence and deeds, reminded their brothers in every hour of trial of their deep devotion to the cause ; and thinking of her well-filled mission as an angel of mercy, the soldier feels that if in the better land the angels have sex, the spirits of women must rest nearer to the Throne, and their voices must sing the sweeter song of praise.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CONFEDERACY BIASECTED.

It was a beautiful thought of the great general, after the fall of the Mississippi strongholds, to say in his dispatch after Vicksburg, "The Father of Waters flows unvexed to the sea." The Confederacy was bisected in July, '63, and to prevent communication between the sections, gunboats were stationed at intervals along the river, while others patrolled it day and night to prevent the enemy from crossing with mails. Every skiff on the river was destroyed, and scouting parties searched every creek and bayou for canoes, rafts, and boats which the people on the river might have secreted. Despite this vigilance the wings of the Confederacy were in daily communication. Copies of Shreveport papers obtained by the scouts a few weeks after the fall of Vicksburg contained news from the East subsequent to the Union control of the river.

Captain Warren received orders from the officer commanding at Vicksburg to take whatever men he needed and find out where the rebels crossed their mails. Tennessee, whose acquaintance with North-eastern Georgia rendered him invaluable to the army there, was sent to Rosecrans after the fall of Vicksburg. Captain Warren missed him very much, and when they parted it was with the mutual pledge to meet at the close of the war, and go to Texas together;

Tennessee promising to live on the Brazos if Robert would agree to spend some of every month hunting with him. Old man Dawn and little Ned remained with Captain Warren, and he promised Tennessee to bring them out all right when the fight was over.

Robert selected Gaines, Richardson, Old Dawn, Little Ned—now a learned young man, as tall as his uncle—and Archy to accompany him.

His plan was to enter the neutral country near Port Gibson, where all the people were southern in their feeling, and, by pretending to be on furlough from the Eighth Texas, to interest the people in his crossing, and in that way to find out the underground route to Shreveport. Preparing such papers as he would need to substantiate the character he was about to assume, the scouts mounted and turned their horses' heads toward the scenes of former exploits. They left the Walnut Hill above Vicksburg about noon of the 27th, and before night they were beyond the Big Black and in the neutral territory, where the enemy had no organized troops. The scout must reason in the same way as a general commanding a larger expedition. Indeed, an error of judgment would be more fatal to the scout than to the superior officer. Captain Warren knew that if the enemy was crossing mails he would carry them as far as possible by rail, and that on the line between the railroad terminus at Brandon and the river he would find the information he needed. He could not go to Brandon with safety, for it was in the hands of the enemy, and he feared meeting the courier or any of Colonel Scott's men, who were so badly beaten at Yazoo City through his instrumentality.

Hobart's Station, a place burned by Grierson on his famous raid, was the point aimed at, and early on the following morning the scouts entered the place. As they sat on their horses looking at the ruins of the depot, two men came up, one dressed in a Confederate uniform.

"Who did that?" asked Captain Warren, pointing to the ruins after he had saluted the strangers.

"The Yanks, whin they raided through har," said the soldier in a quiet tone, while his companion, with a New England inquisitiveness, asked :

"Whar mout you an' your friens be agoin', stranger? We haint got no troops about har."

"I am going west of the Mississippi if I can make it with my friends. We are just from our army, and are going home on furlough," said the captain.

"Wall, stranger, you've got a hard road afore you. Some fellars, though, passes har a goin' west. Do n't know how they gits across, but I reckon they does, seein' as how they do n't come back."

This information was given by the old man.

"I intend staying about here to-day," said Robert ; "our horses are tired, and I want to learn all I can about the crossing. By the way, my friend, can you tell me where I can get our animals cared for? I am willing to pay well for it."

The old man replied to Robert : "I reckon we kin keer for you an' the hosses, if you kin put up with what we has—hog an' hominy."

"That is just what we Texans were raised on," said Robert. "But we care more for our horses, as all cavalrymen should, than we do for ourselves."

The old man led the way to a house on the out-

skirts of the little village, where, with his limited accommodations, he did everything in his power for the comfort of man and beast.

During the day Robert moved about, talking with the people, and he succeeded in learning that Mr. Stockhouse, who lived near Port Gibson, knew something about the crossing, as the mail carriers stopped at his place. Early next morning Robert paid the kind-hearted Mississippian the moderate sum of one hundred dollars in graybacks for the accommodation of himself and friends, and started for Port Gibson to find Mr. Stockhouse.

They reached Port Gibson about the middle of the afternoon, and with little difficulty ascertained the whereabouts of the Stockhouse plantation on the Bayou Perè. Mr. Stockhouse was a short, florid, little man, somewhat advanced in years, with a young wife and an old daughter by a former marriage. He agreed willingly to let Warren and his friends remain all night, but he plead a total ignorance of mails and mail-carriers. Miss Stockhouse was very agreeable, and Mrs. Stockhouse more so. From the latter lady the captain learned that a gentleman named Arkles, living near Bruinsboro', had a boat, with which, for a consideration, he was willing to transport men bound west across the Mississippi. The next morning the captain named Arkles to Mr. Stockhouse, and asked for a letter to him. Mr. Stockhouse at first expressed surprise, but finally consented to write to Mr. Arkles, though he assured the captain he knew nothing about the crossing, and he questioned if Mr. Arkles did. Mr. Stockhouse, though "a good Southern man," did not object to taking as large a sum of money as the

scouts had paid the previous night. The ride to Mr. Arkles's plantation was once familiar ground—the very territory traversed by Grant in his advance on Vicksburg.

About the middle of the afternoon of the day they left Mr. Stockhouse's, Captain Warren and his friends reached Mr. Arkles's, about four miles from the Mississippi River. Mr. Arkles was a wealthy planter. He was a Northern man, and seemed to have but one object, viz., the saving of his large plantation from the people of either side.

To Captain Warren he was extremely reticent. He knew nothing about crossing the river. When the Federal troops under Grant had passed there he had taken the oath of allegiance, and no inducement could make him change. His honor and his conscience were alike bound by that oath.

Captain Warren presented his side of the case. He was a Texan, with a limited furlough. He wished to cross the Mississippi, and money with him was no object. He further urged that an oath under the circumstances represented by Mr. Arkles was not binding, and beyond that there was a duty which every good man should not neglect—this was the duty he owed to himself and to the Confederacy.

After Captain Warren's half-indignant speech on this subject Mr. Arkles stroked his thin beard and called him aside.

"I know, captain," he said, "you are a good man. I can see that in your face, and I ain't one of them as can be sold. But I tell you the truth, I am playing a pretty bold game. The Yanks have destroyed every skiff on the river, and believe they have full

control of the Mississippi. They have, so far as their gunboats are concerned; but I was born in Yankee land, and I can pull the wool over their eyes. I have built a skiff, which is now out in the gin-house. It fits like a box in a wagon. I can put it on wheels, and no man would know what it meant but myself. I can take the box off on the banks of the river, and after I have sent over our friends I can put the box on the wagon and come back here as innocent as a lamb.”

“I am delighted to hear you speak so, Mr. Arkles,” said the captain. “I suppose you took your oath with a mental reservation. Now tell me when you can take us across.”

“I hope to be able to put you over to-night. Mr. Rose, of Shreveport, is expected here every hour from Brandon. He is a splendid fellow. He hates Yankees like the devil and feels proud of having thinned out a few. I just wish we had more men like him. I bet there would n’t be many Yankee prisoners taken. He’s just as full of fight as a wild-cat.”

“I shall be more than happy to get over the river with your friend, Mr. Rose,” said the captain as they walked from the gin-house, where the boat was concealed, to the house.

The residence of Mr. Arkles was like that of the majority of Southern planters, low and flat, with a wide gallery around it. As they sat upon the piazza, after the evening meal, enjoying their pipes while they listened to Mr. Arkles’s description of the Yankee advance from the river to Vicksburg, a large man, about forty years of age, mounted on a powerful horse, rode up to the gallery and dismounted. The

animal stood quietly while the rider, after dismounting, lifted off the heavy saddle-bags and unloosed the pistol holsters and threw them over his arm. He was a powerful man, over six feet in height, with coarse features, rendered more repulsive by a gash over the right eye and a broken nose, with the wide nostrils starting, apparently, from the broad, brown face.

Throwing the bridle of his horse to a black man, who approached as he dismounted, he walked with the saddle-bags and holsters on his powerful arm toward the house.

"Hello, Arkles, got the boat all right?" asked Rose, in a voice so familiar that Robert could hardly retain his seat.

"Glad to see you, Rose. Got the boat safe still. I take a pride in being able to fool the d——d Yankees. By the way, come over here;" this was said with a motion of the hand to Rose, who was about to enter the house. "Come, I want to introduce you to some men who are going to Texas."

Rose turned, and, with a suspicious look on his coarse face, said, as he shook hands with the party:

"Going to Texas, are yeh? Well, the less company I have the better; but if you're boun' that way I reckon we kin make out together. Ever in Texas afore?"

"Oh yes; was raised there. Have relatives living below Houston. Have been making my home in Kentucky, but the Yanks are in there now, and I am going west to spend my furlough—perhaps to join our forces over there."

"Well, I believe your name's Clay; is it?"

"Yes, a part of it, Mr. Rose."

“Know anybody around Brazoria, perhaps?”

“Oh, lots of people.”

“The h—l you say! Wall, I knows some of 'em, an' I reckon some of 'em knows Sam Rose. We'll talk agin afore we start.”

Rose called Mr. Arkles aside and strode into the house.

“He does n't know us, Robert, but we know him. Thank God for this chance. I have prayed for it. When we drifted off on that raft I seemed to think more of meeting this fellow and living for it than anything else.”

“Hush, Gaines,” said the captain. “‘Time at last sets all things even.’ We have watched our hour. Come, let us look at the horses.”

The scouts went to the stable, where Archy was busy cleaning the horses, and in a short time Mr. Arkles, who had left Rose smoking on the gallery, joined them.

“Rose is narvous,” said Mr. Arkles. “You see he has a whole lot of letters and papers and money for Kirby Smith, and in these times one do n't know who to trust. I've fixed it right, I reckon, but afore you leave to-night won't you show him your papers?”

“Why, certainly,” said the captain. “I will show Mr. Rose my papers; and say to him for me that I admire his caution, and will do all I can to get him over the river safely.”

Mr. Arkles left with a look of comfort on his face, and on his return to the house the captain convinced Mr. Rose of his earnestness by showing his papers and offering his services to aid him in his important undertaking.

“I’m glad to have you along, sir; but yeh knows one has to be keerful. I’ve seen so many dogon’d skunks that I’ve begun to doubt my own brother—that is, I would doubt him if I had one,” added Rose, correcting himself.

“All men bound by kindred interests, or battling for a common principle, are brothers. Let me hope,” said the captain, “that no fear you may have entertained may prevent your confiding in me fully if an occasion should arise.”

“I’ll lean on yeh, cap. Come, let’s have some of Arkles’s old peach to confirm our acquaintance!”

All the men availed themselves of Rose’s invitation, and after the old peach they betook themselves to the gallery and pipes.

“I belong to Gould’s Cavalry,” said Rose, in answer to an inquiry of Gaines. “We’ve been stationed near Cadder Lake for a long while, but when Vicksburg went up, as I know’d the country well, I was detailed as a courier; an’, atween us, I makes it pay.”

“You are right, Mr. Rose, to take care of No. 1, particularly if it is in the line of duty,” said Richardson, with a cold smile.

“I tell you, cap.,” said Rose, turning to Robert and blowing a cloud of smoke from his corn-cob pipe, “I came near making a pile out of some runaway fellers from the part of the country you are going to.”

“You do n’t say! Tell me all about it,” said Robert, in a tone of genuine interest.

“Wall, yeh see, ’twuz in the spring of ’61, arter we’d voted out, thar wuz a feller named Warren—maybe yeh know’d him?”

“I think I did,” said Robert, seeing that Rose stopped for an answer.

“You see,” continued Rose, “this feller Warren, with another cuss an’ a nigger, killed a whole lot of folks in the woods near the town the night of the election. Wall, they runned off up by Marshall an’ the lakes, an’ a chap named Bentley arter them.”

“Oh yes, Bentley! I knew Bentley; he was afterwards in the Eighth Texas Cavalry. Poor, brave fellow, he was killed last year.”

Rose waited till Robert had finished before he puffed out the smoke, which swelled his brown cheeks till they looked as if they would burst.

“Yas, Bentley wuz purty fair, a little chicken-hearted though; but Warren—glad you do n’t know much of him; he was a cuss. Bentley got me ter help him arter Warren an’ the other two. A party of us chased ’em down the Shreveport road, an’ we ’d a got ’em as sure as shootin’ if it was n’t for an onery houn’ named Tennessee we had along. He helped ’em inter the bottom whar he had a frien’ named Tad, but somehow they got off, though I never see’d sich a flood as followed. We cotched Tad, though he fit like a catamount, an’ wuz wounded, but we swung the onery whelp to a tree near the creek an’ burned down his d——d shanty.”

“You deserve a great deal of credit for your services, Mr. Rose.” As the captain spoke his lips grew thin and hard-looking, and his gray eyes seemed to grow black, while Gaines, to hide his own feelings, walked to the end of the gallery. Rose did not notice the change. He was completely off his guard, and he continued with an air of bravado:

“I think if ev’ry one did his duty like me thar would n’t be many Yankees left. I often thinks of

that spring an' the number of onery houz's. I helped string up."

"I presume you have been in battle, judging from that wound on your face?" said the captain, in an inquiring tone.

"Wall, no; I've never been egsactly in battle," said Rose, rubbing his finger over the livid wound till it left a white mark and increased the hideousness of his face, "but I got that in a fight as wuz a fight. Cuss that black-hearted Warren, I say. Every time I see or feel this woun' I cuss the houn', an' long ter meet him an' cut his Yankee throat!"

Rose's wound became more livid, his eyes rolled, and the thick veins stood out like whip-cords in his bull-like neck.

"Why, I did not suppose, from your story, that you ever saw or had an encounter with this man Warren," said the captain, as he leaned over and knocked the ashes from his pipe on the edge of the gallery.

"No more I did n't fight him, 'cept one night in the dark; but we got that feller Tennessee arter, an' he allus wuz a devil. He showed fight, and mashed me here with his rifle."

"Of course you hanged this fellow you call Tennessee?" said the captain.

"Wall, no, but we tried dogon'd hard. We put him in jail an' give him a fair trial. Of course, he wuz sentenced; we all know'd that; but somehow he got off one night, an' I heerd since as how he'd joined Warren, who's captain or suthin' of a lot of horse-thieves."

"You don't tell me! Is this Warren still in the Yankee army?" asked Richardson with the shadow of a smile on his quiet face.

“Oh, yes. He’s h—l on hosses. He stole Whar-ton’s hoss, I heard. He courts southern girls inside our lines. An’ I jist heard a few days since as how he writ a letter to Joe Johnston. He can make himself black or white. I heard a man say he could grow a whole crop of beard in one night. An’ some of the boys thinks the devil helps him. But some day they’ll catch him, and then the devil won’t save him. That’s what I’s got to say.”

Rose refilled his pipe, while Robert said :

“You have interested me very much, Mr. Rose. Let me hope this fellow Tennessee had enough property to confiscate to remunerate you, at least in satisfaction.”

“No, he was poor as a Digger Ingin at Christmas. He had a wife an’ some children, an’ a shanty, an’ he left them behind.”

“That would be rather poor stock to confiscate, Mr. Rose?”

“Yes, poor for the government, but cap, ’twas enough for me. It mayn’t look jes’ right to folks as reads the Bible an’ sings hymns, but a feller as has a woun’ on his face, an’ mad in his heart, don’t stop ter consult about goodness. Some one fired that ar shanty whar Tennessee’s wife lived, an’ when she got another that was fired too. She wuz a-sassy white wench as ever lived. She moved up to Tyler, but her house wuz fired thar. An’ her young ones got sick, an’ thar’s not one of Tennessee’s whelps a livin’. Of course I knows nothin’ about it. His wife’s among the Ingins, I hear. It don’t pay to fool with Sam Rose.”

A low chuckle, that sent the hot blood back from

the flushed cheeks of Robert Warren, succeeded this narration.

"I suppose we will start soon, Mr. Rose? It is nearly dark now."

"Yas, jes' as soon as the critters feel right. They have a long swim before them," replied Rose.

Robert suggested walking down to see the horses, but Rose announced his intention to take no unnecessary exercise.

At the stable Archy was busy with the horses, and as soon as the captain made his appearance, he called him aside. "Mauss Robut"—Archy paused as if to catch his breath.

"I am listening, Archy."

"Mauss Robut, dat 'ar man as own dis hoss," pointing to Rose's, "dat dar man's de one as chased us to de lakes. Rose—don't you 'member?"

"Yes, I remember. And, Archy, I propose letting Mr. Rose know before the sun rises again that I have not forgotten it."

"May de good Lor' help yeh to press dat dar on his mine," said Archy, as he turned to brush down the horses.

Calling Gaines, who was boiling over with anger, and Richardson, who seemed to be steely cold, to one side, he hurriedly told them his plans, and gave them the signal to be used in overpowering Rose. Then they returned to the house, where Rose still sat smoking, and stroking his beard, and making white marks in his purple wound with his thick fingers.

"I've just ordered the boy to load up the boat," said Mr. Arkles, appearing in the gallery. "It will be around soon; and as it fits on the wagon bed just

like a box, why you can all put your saddle-bags an' horse-traps into it."

"Thank you, Mr. Arkles. You are a most thoughtful man. Permit me now to settle with you, not only for your hospitality, but also for our journey across the river. How much will it be?"

"Well, I can't just say. The care here ain't so much, but I run a big risk of losing my team, and my boy, every time, and then if the Yankees found me out they would raise old Cain purty high, fur you see I took the oath."

"I know all that, of course, and am willing to pay for your risk," said the captain.

"Things has riz a good deal," said Mr. Arkles, stroking his beard. I value that team an' boy this blessed moment at eight thousand dollars."

"I think that a big price, sir, but I assure you I have no desire to buy them," said the captain, laughing at the exorbitant sum.

"I know, but if I lose them serving you, it's all the same as if I sold them to you. Money is more plenty than it was; I only wish it was just as good."

"I wish it was, Mr. Arkles. Would you take less in Yankee money?"

"Of course he would 'nt touch the cussed green stuff," bellowed Rose, with a coarse laugh. "Pay him five hundred apiece, in good Confed. That's plenty."

"Yes, that's plenty," said Mr. Arkles.

"Your modesty quite astounds me," said the captain. "You will die poor, Mr. Arkles, but of course the trifle of five hundred apiece does not include payment for your princely hospitality?"

“That’s for you to say, captain. I want to help the cause all I can. If you can afford to give me another hundred apiece, all right.”

Robert had an abundance of the gray stuff always on hand, and he paid the desired sum. As he was doing so, Mr. Arkles called him aside, and said in a whisper :

“Captain, if you have greenbacks, now I’m near the Yankees they’d be more useful. I’ll put you all through for fifty dollars apiece, keep and all.”

“I wish I could accommodate you, Mr Arkles, but I have not that amount.”

“How much have you, sir.”

“Well, not over one hundred dollars.”

“I’ll take one hundred dollars in greenbacks and half the amount of Confederate I asked, if it will suit you.”

“You are very kind, but the fact is I keep the greenbacks as a curiosity. Though in the army so long, I have seen but little of this Yankee money, and I want to hold onto it.”

“All right, captain, I’d rather have the other, but it ain’t so convenient.”

By this time the wagon was at the door, driven by a stout-looking negro boy, and drawn by two very small mules. Inside the boat were oars, ropes, pins for rowlocks, and bundles of hickory bark for torches.

“Them holes in the back part of the boat, and along the side,” said Mr. Arkles, as he held the light while the saddle-bags were being put in, “are for pegs to fasten your horses heads to. You’ll find, with care, that it won’t be hard to cross.”

The horses were saddled, the wagon started. The

men shook hands with Arkles, and, mounting, followed the wagon down the sandy road. Under moss-covered branches, down heavy descents the wagon kept on for more than an hour; then, followed by the horsemen, it descended a ravine, along which flowed a black creek bordered by cypress trees. A few hundred yards down the wagon halted. A cold breeze and a low murmur, with an undefined background to a broad expanse, told them they were on the banks of "The Father of Waters."

"Heah's de place, gemmens," said the black boy, leaping from the wagon.

"Were you ever over here before?" asked Robert.

"Gosh-a-massy! nearly ebery night, for a long time," answered the black boy, as he proceeded to unhitch his mules and fasten them to an adjoining tree.

The horses were quickly unsaddled, and it proved an easy job for the strong arms to lift off the boat and launch it in the black creek, that was swallowed up in the great river a few yards down. The saddles and bridles, with Rose's mail-bags and the rest of the impediments, were stowed carefully away. The horses were allowed to cool off for a few minutes before leading them into the water. Then they were made fast to the pins. Archy and the "boy" took the oars. Robert appointed himself coxswain, with Rose sitting at his feet, while the other two were detailed to shorten the ropes and keep the horses close to the boat. Robert had Señor along, and that noble animal was as dainty of wetting himself as was the ill-starred Don.

This was no ordinary undertaking, the crossing of a wide, deep river on a dark night, with a frail shell

of a boat, and five struggling, panting horses fastened to the side.

“All ready, mauss,” said the black boy.

“All ready,” echoed the men. The oars were driven into the muddy bank, the boat floated off, and the horses followed, encouraged by the words of the men in the boat. Out to the great river the horses waded; deeper and deeper the water became. With powerful strokes the black men bent to the oars. A few pulls in the swift current, and with a wild plunge the horses descended and struggled to the side of the boat, as if for protection. One mile before them the river stretched, but every stroke lessened the distance. The explosive breathings of the frightened animals became louder, and the men strained their eyes for the farther shore. Out farther and farther, till the middle of the stream was gained, and a black, shadowy outline was marked against the starry sky, and told them of the Louisiana shore. A feeling of safety came over the party in the little boat, but it came quickly to be dispelled. Down the dark river rolled the tolling of a bell, with a puff, puff, puff, like the breathing of a river monster, and an instant afterward the lights from the gunboat rounding the bend above flooded the hitherto gloomy river, and rendered visible the anxious faces in the boat and the struggling horses alongside. The black men, with their brawny arms bared, threw their souls into their oars, and the boat moved faster than the horses. This would not do. The position was critical in the extreme. The patrol boat must discover them, and, supposing them foes, a shower of grape would send the boat to the bottom of the river with its loyal and

traitor inmates. The full force of the position flashed upon Robert, and for the time a feeling of horror ran through him, such as he had never before experienced. Nearer and nearer came the boat. It appeared to be rushing down on them as if aware of their whereabouts. The black men showed signs of tiring, and at Robert's request, Gaines and Richardson took their places and bent to the oars. The steamer was abreast of them; men were seen hurrying along the deck; the whistle sounded, there was a roar of escaping steam, and the vessel became stationary.

The panting of the horses seemed to increase, and the oars in the row-locks creaked as if they could be heard across the river.

"Oh, God! let the horses go; let the horses go! We'll be caught—pull, pull, pull!"

As Rose spoke he made an effort to untie one of the horses, but the captain bent forward and caught his arm.

"Hold, there! Do n't dare to unfasten a horse. Work easy, men, so as to keep about stationary." This was said as Robert turned the boat's head up and waited the result.

"Let me throw over my saddle-bags, captin. My Lor', if the Yanks wuz to git them!"

"Be still, sir. I'll talk to you if we ever get on shore!"

Rose cowered down in the bottom of the boat with his livid face turned to the light, and an expression of fear upon it that made it perfectly hideous.

Another whistle from the steamer, more hurrying along the deck with moving lights, then came the steady puff, puff, puff, and the gunboat *Rattler* steamed down toward Rodney.

"Pull away, boys, the danger is past," said the captain in a cheerful voice.

"Yes, pull away, boys!" said Rose, sitting up in the boat.

A few minutes, and the horses began to stagger along the unreliable bottom. The shingling shore was seen running out, and a few strokes shot the flat-bottomed boat on the gravelly beach, to which the rowers leaped with an exclamation of delight.

"By thunder, that was nearer to the Yankees than I ever want to be agin," said Rose as he jumped on shore with his saddle-bags.

"Let the horses rest before saddling up. Boy, do you return to Mr. Arkles's to-night?"

"Yes, mauss; I allus does when I comes down."

"Well, you have done nobly. I am sorry you have to go back alone. Light one of those torches."

"The boy lighted the torch, and Robert handed him a Confederate bill of a denomination so large that it astonished Rose, who stood near by, and raised the donor very much in his estimation, while it evoked a torrent of verbal gratitude from the black boy, who became quite patriarchal in his prayers and blessings "for de young mauss."

The black boy pushed off the boat, bade all good night, and was soon lost to sight on the river and in the darkness. As they saddled up, Robert asked:

"Where do you intend stopping for the rest of the night, Rose? Our horses are fatigued by this swim, and I would rather not ride very far."

"Wall, cap., thar's a place back heah a mile whar we mout stop, but reckon 'taint safe, coz the Yankee cavalry scout along thar. We 'd better git back eight

miles ter the Washita distreeck ; it's safe thar, an' we kin res' to-morrow mornin'."

"Glad to see you so prudent, Rose. We will ride for the Washita."

Up from the river the little party rode, Rose to the left of the captain, the others immediately behind.

"I tell you, I'll never get this night out of my mind," said Rose after they had ridden some distance in silence. "I do n't know what in thunder I'd a did if you wuz n't along."

"Oh, you are a brave fellow, Rose! You would have made out all right."

"I ain't so sure about making out. I'd cut the horse loose, anyhow."

"Yes, and the horse would have gone for the light, and let the cat out of the bag at once. However, 'a miss is as good as a mile.' My only fear was that this crossing might be discovered, and then I would have a tough time getting back next month when my leave expires."

"You would n't go back this way, at any rate. Of course not. I'll fix you for that before we part."

"What? Tell me how I can cross from this side!"

"Sartin, I kin ; an' as you've got ter know, I do n't mine lettin' it right out. Yeh mus' go down ter Waterproof—'tain't far below this—an' hunt up Dr. Campbell: he lives up the river from the town an' right on the bluff. He's got a boat, but of course he'll lie about it at first till he knows yer all right. He's sound on the Confederacy, an' 'll put you over for less than you give that cuss Arkles. But be keerful ; the doctor trades with the Yankees. He took the oath, but says he did it with a reservation." As Rose

finished he took a large chew of tobacco and tried to laugh.

"I do n't think the Yankees are as bad as you imagine, Rose." They were now about two miles from the river, and as the captain spoke he placed his horse nearer to Rose, and quietly loosened a pistol in the holster.

"Bad, did you say?"

"Yes, that's what I said."

"Why cap, the very devils are angels compared to 'em. God, ef I had the power I'd crush them out as I would snakes—I've helped do it to some on 'em."

"I was in their hands for some time; they treat prisoners very justly. Now if they had captured us this evening, they would have been very considerate of your claims to clemency."

"By G—, sir; I'd rather be dead! I never want to try it."

"You do n't!"

"Why, Lor', no!"

"You must, sir; I am a Yankee, and you are my prisoner."

A scream of fear and rage burst from Rose's lips as he drove his spurs into his horse and tried to break away. But a man who in days gone past had often leaped from a horse while at full gallop, lariat in hand, was by his side, and in an instant Rose was dashed to the ground, with Archy's knee on his breast and Archy's hand at his throat. Gaines and Richardson dismounted, and with their pistols cocked they permitted Rose to rise. A torrent of oaths and imprecations came from Rose as he staggered to his feet.

"Gag him, and we will tie him to his horse." The

order was obeyed despite the struggles of Rose, and with his arms fastened behind him, and his legs tied under the saddle, and the bridle in Archy's hand, the scouts turned their horses' heads north for the peninsula before Vicksburg.

By daylight they stopped near a plantation, where Richardson obtained corn for the animals and food for the men, and carried it out to camp. The prisoner was unbound, and the gag taken from his mouth, on his promising not to attempt escape. He sat on the ground, the picture of fierce despair, muttering low curses and following Robert with his eyes. He wished to ask a question, and at length he managed in a hoarse, choking voice to say: "Ain't you Warren? say, ain't you Warren?"

"Yes, my name is Warren; I know you by reputation very well."

"You are going to hang me, ain't you? Wall, hang and be d——d; I've paid you aforehand."

"I purpose taking you to Vicksburg, and handing you over to General Osterhaus. I can't imagine what he will do with such a fiend as you are by your own confession."

"See heah, Warren, I allers heard you wuz a brave man. Give me a chance for my life. Let me run for it, an' kill me if yeh catch me."

"I am not anxious for such hunts. If you had a spark of manhood about you, I would do all I could to make your position easier, but I cannot forget my own sufferings, Tad's death, the burning of Tennessee's shanty, and the death of his little ones. Talk no more to me—I may be tempted to forget myself and hang you on the spot."

"I did n't kill the young ones. I swar they died of sickness. It was n't my fault." A shudder ran through Rose's frame, and he closed his eyes tightly as he spoke, as if to shut out some fearful picture brought to view by the naming of "Tennessee's children."

Robert was more excited than he seemed, for he had catalogued the wickedness of the fiend before him, and the hot blood throbbled in his usually cool head. Brave Tennessee covered with wounds, his little home in ruins, his little ones dead, his wife among the Indians—all this flashed through Robert's mind. Much of this suffering, he thought, had been brought on the noble-hearted Tennessee by his fidelity to himself, Robert Warren. If Tennessee were with him then, the wretch before him would not live a moment.

Robert walked away and talked with Gaines.

"I would hang him on the spot, captain; such a brute ought not to live a moment," said Gaines, excitedly.

"I would not," said Richardson; "we are within ten miles of Vicksburg; let us start at once and hand this villain over to the proper authorities. All his boasted crimes may be lies. What he did that you know of, that terrible purple wound and disfigured face has paid for."

"You are right, Richardson, you are right. Let us start at once." Robert turned as he spoke, startled by a yell, and to see Rose with a knife in his hand rushing in the opposite direction to where he stood. It was unnecessary to shout "Archy! Archy! after him, quick!" as all seized their pistols and started in pursuit.

Archy was not ten yards behind the fugitive, who, nerved by desperation, seemed to fly over the ground. He was older and heavier than Archy, but in activity, strength, and fleetness, far his inferior. The race was short. A fence barred the advance unexpectedly, and then Rose turned with uplifted knife and struck his pursuer, who was close upon him. Archy caught the arm that held the knife, and the weapon dropped from the relaxed fingers. Then both men clinched; it was but for a second. Stepping on a frail stick, Archy slipped, with his arms about Rose, and both men fell, Archy below. Quick as a flash Rose seized the knife, and tried to disengage his arm for the blow, but before he could raise it, Richardson's pistol flashed, and Rose leaped back and fell with a small red hole in his forehead above the purple wound.

"Why, Archy, what are you good for?"

"Why, I cotched him, an' was n't watchin'. Why, Mauss Robut, I jest wish yeh'd let us alone two minutes more, I'd a had his throat in my hand, an' you know that's short work."

A few tremors of the powerful frame, a spasmodic gasping as if struggling to retain the spirit, and Rose lay dead 'neath the fence. A search of his person discovered valuable dispatches for Smith and Magruder.

Returning to camp they mounted hastily, and as they were about to start a negro came in, to whom Robert paid some money on his promising to bury Rose.

Back safely to Vicksburg the scouting party got, with information more valuable than was expected. This exploit was so well managed that Warren ex-

changed "the knightly bars" for "the golden leaves," and received a special mention from his superior officer. It is unnecessary to say that Mr. Arkles was attended to, and that Dr. Campbell at Waterproof had his trade and his boat cut off.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IN HOSPITAL.⁵

Shortly after the adventure narrated in the preceding chapter, the scouts were ordered to report to General Rosecrans, then advancing after Bragg through the mountain fastnesses of Northwestern Georgia. Tennessee, whose acquaintance with that region was invaluable, had been ordered on, and now the rest were going to the field of greater activities. Unfortunately for Robert Warren, he was at this time attacked by the malarious fever incident to the lower valley of the Mississippi and particularly to the region along the Big Black and Yazoo. He was forced for the time to remain behind, and it pained him more than his illness to part with his friends Gaines and Richardson. Archy of course staid behind and watched his master during the first week of delirium and fever. At his request Mary was not informed of his illness, and knowing that the fever was not fatal he waited patiently till it spent its force. During the period of his convalescence, he was placed on light post duty, though he yearned to be with Rosecrans and his own men. The incident of his illness changed the whole course of his subsequent military career, and though it deprived him of the excitement incident to the movements of large armies, it increased his opportunities for individual adventures, and gave him as

good a chance for the display of his undoubted abilities. Sherman's raid on Meridian was one of the boldest, and at the same time one of the most futile expeditions of the war, and had that famous officer's military record closed with this exploit his name would be much less brilliant; and yet the undertaking in the hands of any other man would have been more than a failure—it would have been a complete disaster. For some time prior to the raid on Meridian, Western and Central Mississippi was the scene of constant skirmishes, and the scouting ground of small bodies from either side.

Robert Warren was retained by General Osterhaus at Vicksburg much against his wish. The destruction of a few secreted boats on the Mississippi did not stop the crossing of mails; had it done so it would have been little to the credit of the Confederates, who had ample opportunity to cross, in the absence of patrol boats, at any point between Memphis and New Orleans. Mails were not only crossed nightly, but herds of cattle from Texas were swum over below Natchez, and the Confederates becoming familiar with the once dreaded gunboats, sent light batteries to the wooded bends of the river, where they proved a constant annoyance to the steamers, and necessitated the organization of a number of small land expeditions against them. The country between Waterproof and Natchez was particularly dangerous, owing to the constant annoyance of Smith's gang and their artillery. This Smith was a German who had been an artillery officer in his own country. Before the war he drifted into Waterproof, and after hostilities began he went into the Southern army, more from a

love of excitement than any prompting of principle. He knew enough of military movements to be looked up to with admiration by his followers, and his want of feeling and natural cruelty stood for the hate and vindictiveness of the men he had gathered about him. He was, like all innate cowards, much given to bragging, and one of his boasts was the hanging of a poor drunken Yankee caught away from his command. The planters along the river were in league with Smith, and when he was pursued his forces always scattered, and were sure to be secreted in the different plantations bordering the Mississippi.

About the middle of September a fugitive negro came to Rodney, below Vicksburg, and reported Smith with some sixty men at Holcomb's, thirty miles down the river, where he was preparing for a raid. The soldiers and sailors stationed at Rodney owed Smith a grudge, for, a short time before, in the absence of troops, a number of officers from the gunboat *Rattler* went on shore to church, and during the service Smith's men appeared, stopped the clergyman with their cocked revolvers, and carried the officers away prisoners. The news of Smith's proximity was speedily sent to Vicksburg, and a cavalry force organized to hunt him. Warren was given command of the expedition, and, though not fully recovered from his fever, the prospect of active service had a better effect than all the medicine at the corps hospital.

Much of the country to be passed over was already familiar by the advance on Vicksburg and the frequent scouts before and after the siege. This fact, added to the success which had attended Warren's previous service, was the cause of his selection, and

he determined, as his force of one hundred men started southeast from the Walnut Hills, that the confidence of his superiors should not be misplaced. Captain Rolston and Lieutenant Thomas, of Missouri, as brave men as ever carried saber, accompanied the expedition, and, being both young and unused to this kind of service, they looked up to Warren as a veritable hero, and felt proud to be under an officer who had been so successful.

The evening of the day on which they started from Vicksburg they went into camp below Warrenton, on the west side of the Big Black. The position was elevated, overlooking the river, and surrounded by great gloomy trees, that spread away to the river and along it in dark green vistas, that grew gloomy and weird-looking by the light of the camp, as the evening wind shook the heavy live-oak branches, and the long, gray moss swung back and forth with a chilling, mysterious sound. The men had picketed their horses and eaten their suppers; the videttes were stationed, and about the blazing fires, that shone on trees adorned with sabers and carbines, the bronzed soldiers reclined and smoked with as much happiness as if on a picnic near their northern homes. The fire about which the officers gathered, and where Archy was the presiding spirit, was below the main camp, and on the only line by which an enemy could approach on that side of the river. Suddenly, on the opposite shore of the Big Black, a score of campfires lit the crest of the hill and drove the shadows from the live-oaks. Forms in gray were busy about them, and wearied horses, relieved of their saddles, rolled on the mossy earth. Down to the river the

rebel soldiers, either unconscious of or uncaring for the fire on the opposite bank, so visible, came to water their horses and wash their own dust-covered faces. The proceeding was very strange; and Warren, who had no desire at that time to bring on a useless skirmish across the river, had everything in readiness for an attack. The river at this point was about six hundred feet across, and the distance between the two camps certainly not over twice that distance. The Union cavalrymen, in the indistinct light, could see a number of men examining the trees with a torch along the opposite shore. At length one of them gave a very inelegant expression of surprise, and shouted out:

“I’ve got it, I swear to h—l!”

This increased the mystery of the search to the Union men, particularly when an axe was seen gleaming in the torchlight and the faint strokes came over the river, as the instrument, swung by a stalwart fellow, was buried again and again in the root of the tree.

All this was too much for the curiosity of a cavalryman up the river. He approached the water, and, placing his hands to his mouth the better to convey the sound, he called out:

“Hello there!”

The reply came back:

“Hello thar yerself, an’ see how ye’ll like it!”

“Say, say!” from the cavalryman.

“Say away!” from the rebel.

“Are you fellows Johnnies?”

Over the river came the answer:

“Bet yer bottom dollar we are.”

"What in thunder are you cuttin' that little tree for? It ain't done you no harm," from the Yankee.

"No! It's goin' to do us a power of good," answered the rebel.

"Well, tell us what it's for!" roared the cavalrman, whose curiosity grew more excited.

"Why, you blue-bellied son of a gun, we 're gittin' sassafras to make coffee!"

This reply was so unexpected, so harmless, and so probable, that it was hailed with a shout of merriment from the Union camp.

"Come over here and get some real coffee!" called out one of the Yankees.

The words "real coffee" seemed to have a magical effect on the men about the sassafras tree. They stopped, held a short consultation, sent one of their number up the hill, and then the man with the torch walked out and stood so distinctly visible against the dark background of the hill, that any man on the opposite shore could have killed him with his carbine. Among the old soldiers of both sides, however, an unarmed man on the picket line was safe, and the pickets themselves, when not ordered to fire by their officers; and even at such times it was customary to give warning in the words of the negro song, "Look out dar now, I 'se a-gwine to shoot," or "Hunt yer hole, Johnny," or "Yank," as the case might be.

The man with the torch waved it like a truce signal, and believing he had commanded the attention of the men on the opposite shore, he called out:

"Who are you? What Yanks?"

Warren, with his officers, staid quietly back during the conversation.

“We’re from Vicksburg, out on a hunt. Come over an’ get yer coffee.”

“See here, Yank, we’re squar’ soldiers over heah—Major Dwight’s battalion. If we send will you let us come back with the coffee?”

This was a poser. One of the men came running back to where the officers stood, and, saluting the major, he asked:

“Major Warren, would you have any objection to our trading some coffee with the Johnnies for tobacco?”

“Not in the least, if you can inform me how it is to be done.”

“There’s a canoe, sir, just above here; we could send it over.”

“Yes, but suppose the Johnnies keep the canoe and man?”

“Why, major, you do n’t think they’d be so darn’d mean as that?”

The possibility of such a thing being done never entered into the soldier’s head.

“See what they say,” said Warren. “Do n’t send any coffee with the canoe; they must come over for it.”

“Thank you, sir,” said the soldier, in a rejoiced tone, as he saluted and started back to the river.”

A large number of gray-coats without arms came down from the camp-fires, while the man with the torch waved it in fiery circles above his head, either to keep it burning or from excitement at the prospect of getting some real coffee.

“Have you fellows a boat?” called out a Yankee.

“Nary boat; but we can make a raft.”

“Never mind the raft; we’ll send over a canoe,” said the Yankee.

A score of men was ready to volunteer. One stalwart young fellow stepped in, and, seizing the paddle, pushed into the river, and was watched by the anxious crowds on each side till he touched the opposite shore.

The noise of his greeting, “How are you, Yank? Glad to see you! Whar’s the coffee?” and kindred salutations were distinctly audible on the opposite side. In few minutes the canoe was seen returning with two additional occupants, who were met with a greeting as warm as the Yankee had received. The coffee was soon forthcoming and the tobacco delivered, and, after shaking hands all around, the Union cavalryman carried the Confederate over the river and returned with the canoe.

The camp-fires burned more brightly for the short visit of peace, and more than one man on the opposite banks prayed that it might be speedily made permanent. Just before nine o’clock the song of “Auld Lang Syne” was started by one of the Union soldiers, and it spread like a pleasant contagion from fire to fire. Over the black river it floated, and was taken up by the men who had just drunk real coffee provided by their enemies, and the last chorus echoed through the grand, gloomy woods with an effect not soon to be forgotten. Hardly had “Auld Lang Syne” died out when one of the Confederates started the air of “Old Hundred.” The words were not audible to his enemies, but the dear, familiar chorus came back grateful, and friend and foe took up the air with feeling. The fires gradually grew dim, and

with silence and darkness the caution of the videttes increased, lest the men with whom they had just joked and sang should steal upon them unawares with uplifted swords. And this is war.

Long before day, without lighting a fire, Warren's men saddled, and ere the sun rose they were across the Big Black and ten miles from the camp of the previous evening.

By noon the next day the command was eighty miles from Vicksburg by the road it had traveled, but Smith was not there. From some negroes Major Warren learned that Smith had started east that morning with about fifty men and three pieces of artillery. Resting for a short time, they turned east on the road Smith had taken, making inquiries along the road from the negroes. Shortly after sundown they learned that Smith was in camp a mile or two beyond. Ascertaining definitely the place and force, the negro who gave the information was detained to act as a guide. Waiting for darkness, and to rest the men and horses, they started for the plantation where Smith was said to be about ten o'clock. Dismounting the men some distance from the plantation, a sufficient guard was left with the horses, and about seventy men advanced so as to surround the house and yard where Smith and his men were in camp.

The surprise was complete. There was not a guard mounted, and before the rebels knew it they were powerless to resist, and prudently surrendered. Smith himself was in the house, and was somewhat astonished at being called out, and more at finding a pistol to his head, accompanied with the demand to surrender. This he refused to do, and, calling on his men to

fight, he rushed toward the place where they were in camp. It was the rashness of a coward, and he paid for it. Before he had gone ten paces a carbine flashed before him and Smith fell, shot through the heart.

The prisoners were carefully guarded till the early morning, when the Yankees, obtaining a couple of wagons from the planter at whose place they were, they piled in the arms and started north with the prisoners and the three six-pounders for Vicksburg.

Warren's hopes were that he could get back to Vicksburg without encountering the enemy in any force, and report the success of his undertaking. His very desires increased his caution and anxiety.

Late in the afternoon, in company with Archy and an orderly, he rode some distance ahead of the line, with the intention of selecting a camping place. They passed over a slight elevation in the road, and were about to halt before a patch of timber through which the road ran, when suddenly a dozen armed men sprang from the woods, and, while some seized the bridles and led the horses in from the road, the others, with fingers on the trigger, commanded that the prisoners utter not a word. They were hardly out of sight of the road when the tramping of the Union cavalry passing was heard, and the prisoners listened with throbbing hearts till the sound of the retreating horsemen was lost. Then the lieutenant in charge of the rebels, quite a body of whom was in the woods, advanced toward Warren, and, taking Señor's bridle from Archy, he turned the horse over to one of his men.

"Sorry for your fix, sir," said the lieutenant, approaching Major Warren.

“Not half as sorry as I am,” replied the major.

“Of course you have greenbacks about you? You will have no need for them in the place you are going to. Permit me to take charge of them.” The lieutenant was a cool, bland fellow, and as he spoke he twisted his belt till the pistol-holster protruded in suggestive proximity to his right hand. There was no use in opposing this demand, so Warren quietly took out his pocket-book and handed the lieutenant four hundred and fifty dollars.

“I desire to retain the pocket-book, sir,” said the major. “You have all that can be of value to you. The contents, as you can see, consist of private papers and the pictures of my friends.”

“No desire, sir, to interfere with your private affairs,” said the lieutenant, as he fumbled the greenbacks over in his hands. “Permit me to say, sir, this is d—d pretty money for paper.”

“Yes; I think it is artistically good, and intrinsically better than the graybacks your people have to use in such quantities as to give them value.”

“You are mistaken, my friend. Our paper ain’t beautiful, but it’s mighty good. Now there is a chance of your visiting us for some time, let me, as a man who has your interests at heart, give a little advice. All paper is valuable in the South. Of course, it requires some training to know what is cash, but whenever you get hold of a document with the picture of a locomotive or a woman on it—two of the fastest things in creation—hang on to that paper for life; that’s money.”

Major Warren could not suppress a smile at this advice. But his face lengthened when the lieutenant asked: “What is your name, sir?”

"Robert Warren, major of United States Volunteers," was the reply.

"Major Warren. Your name sounds familiar, though I cannot recall the connection. By the way, major, you wear very fine boots. Might I inquire the size?"

The lieutenant looked yearningly at the major's long cavalry boots and compared them, judging from his glances, with his own.

"I wear sevens, I believe, sir," replied the major.

"That is very curious; do you know, major, that is just my size? and while I have no desire to exchange positions with you, my selfish heart prompts me to stand in your shoes."

As the lieutenant concluded a loud laugh from his men, who were gathered around, greeted his coarse wit, and a score of voices called out: "Come up out of them boots! Come up! I know yer thar; see yer head a stickin' out," and kindred expressions, peculiar to the jocose soldiers of both sides.

There was no getting out of it, so Robert Warren pulled off his boots, and the lieutenant did the same, and graciously passed his old ones to his prisoner as he pulled on the new.

While the officer was "going through" Robert Warren, closing with his watch and pocket-knife, the orderly was thoroughly fleeced by the men, even to his blue pants, and he was so completely changed that Robert scarcely knew him.

By this time it had grown completely dark in the woods, and Warren's wondering command had gone on some miles.

The lieutenant, wisely believing a search would be at once instituted for the missing officer, started east

through the woods, mounting his prisoners and keeping them safely guarded.

It was 12 o'clock before the Confederates halted at a plantation, where they procured provisions for the prisoners, and permitted them to sleep without blankets near one of the fires. Archy took off his coat, as his master lay on the ground, and insisted on his master's putting it over him. The major kindly refused, and one of the guards, seeing the transaction, advanced and said to Archy :

“See here, boy, that ar 's a good coat. You do n't seem to have much use for it. Jest fork it over, will yer?”

This was accompanied by a gesture so imperative that Archy at once handed over the stout, blue jacket.

The lieutenant was the guest of the planter, at whose house they stopped, and that worthy could not curb his curiosity. He came out, pipe in hand, to look at the prisoners, and to offer in a truly Southern way his opinion of the Yankees, and his confidence in the success of the Confederacy. Major Warren did not deign to notice the son of chivalry, which fact incensed his anger and added to the fire of his prolonged denunciation.

As Robert lay dozing before the fire, with strange fears and wild dreams haunting his mind, the lieutenant, somewhat the worse for his evening's libations with the planter, laid his hand on his shoulder.

“I'm going to take you to Brandon to-morrow, major, and then, I reckon, they'll send you on to Mobile. Mobile is just the bulliest town, provided, of course, that one is at liberty to see the sights.”

“Well, sir, you are at liberty to rob me, insult me,

and send me where you please. Might I ask what command is honored by the service of so gallant a gentleman?" As Robert spoke he half rose before the fiend and looked into the drunken eyes of the lieutenant.

"Ask any question you choose, so 's it ain't insult-in'," said the lieutenant, playing with the handle of his revolver. "I belong to Scott's Cavalry, now stationed at Brandon; and I want to tell you I'm one of them chaps that would rather blow the head off a d——d Yankee than not!"

"There are cowards of that kind, who are always brave in the presence of unarmed men and old women. They are the robbers of the helpless and insulters of the defenseless!" Robert rose as he spoke. "And I am satisfied you are one of them!" He looked into the unsteady eyes of the lieutenant, and the rebel dropped his hands by his side and muttered:

"I do n't fight with prisoners."

Archy lay on the ground close by, his black eyes burning, his left arm drawn under him, and his powerful limbs ready for a spring.

The lieutenant walked away, growling as he did:

"By ——, you chaps have got to walk to-morrow, and if you do n't keep up with the horses, then may I be d——d!"

The morrow came, cold and cheerless, with a drizzling rain that extinguished the fires before the rebels started. Some of the soldiers divided their rations of corn-bread and bacon with the prisoners, and then they began the march over the sandy roads. The rebels led three horses without riders, while the three prisoners walked, with three guards behind them.

Robert was not accustomed to walking, but he did not complain. The lieutenant's boots did not fit him, and early in the day he took them off and carried them over his shoulder. One of the guards saw the boots and speedily relieved him of them, while another guard took advantage of the circumstance to exchange hats.

The sand was deep and soft, and the socks soon became full of the keen particles, so that by noon every step taken produced the most excruciating pain. The rebels halted for a short time to rest their horses and feet; but the prisoners were kept away from the water, of which their hot, blistered feet were so much in need. Then the march began, and the scalding pain gave place to a numb, heavy feeling, and the white sand clung like a mass of venomous insects to the bleeding, blistered feet. Yet on they walked, the horses in front without riders, the armed guards behind. Conversation was prohibited, yet Archy muttered words of religious comfort as he walked beside his master, and brave Bob Clark, of Bucyrus, Ohio, laughed as if the walk was a pleasure, while his pale lips worked hard with the effort to appear gay. The fever was still in Robert Warren's body, and he felt the heat and chill chasing each other through his veins, and, above all, the excruciating pain of his feet at every step they took. His apparent indifference to pain would have won him the position of a Cheyenne Indian anxious to show his abilities for the war-path. Yet his heart fell when in the rainy twilight the rebels, with their prisoners, halted on the banks of Pearl River, in the very woods where a short time before Warren and his scouts captured Joe Johnston's courier.

The lieutenant slept at the ferry, while the men built fires of pine boughs and went into camp in the woods. The ground was damp, and the prisoners, without covering for their tired bodies or water to wash their blistered feet, lay down, so exhausted by the march of thirty-eight miles that they slept despite hunger, cold, and pain.

Morning came rapidly, and with it a clear sky and a bright warm sun. A ration of badly-cooked corn-bread was served to the prisoners, and then they marched to the ferry, where they were carried across. They were stiff and tired, and the lieutenant seemed pained because he had not the time to make his prisoners swim instead of carrying them.

They reached Brandon early in the day, and were conducted to a dilapidated building with an earthen floor, in which were crowded a number of rebel deserters, negroes, and a few Yankee prisoners. The place was filthy in the extreme, and the inmates, as a class, were the most disreputable representatives of a large class in the Southern army. Though Robert wore no insignia of rank, the men in "the guard-house"—for such the wretched place was called—greeted him as "colonel," and those at first inclined to jeer soon treated him with kindness and consideration. Archy was still with him, and he surprised Robert that night by handing him a pair of new socks.

"Mauss Robut, I reckon I'se washed yer poor feet all clean, now heah's a nice pair of socks. Miss Mary guv 'em to me, Susey guv 'em to her for me, and I'se been a hangin' on to 'em fur Susey."

"I will take them, Archy, for my feet seem on fire. Ah, that water was so cooling. I never knew one's

feet could be so sensitive. The socks feel nice and soft, Archy. I only wish I had a pair of shoes."

Archy looked down at his own large feet and then at the smaller and finely-shaped feet of his master. He evidently made up his mind it would not do to suggest wearing his own, for they were much too large. He cooked the corn-meal ration that was served out, on a griddle that seemed to be used by the prisoners in common, and after his master had eaten a little he went to the other end of the prison. Robert watched him talking to a young man very earnestly, and at times stooping down to feel the young man's boots, and make commentaries evidently unfavorable to the articles in question, for the young man would lift up his foot, slap the covering, and then make emphatic gestures intended to imply that the boots were of the best quality and that a great sum of money would be necessary to replace them—a fact, but the great difficulty was to duplicate them at once. Archy held something in his hand that flashed in the light that blazed in the middle of the room, and the young man's eyes seemed fascinated by the yellow sheen. He stooped, pulled off his boots, and as he handed them to Archy the glittering coin passed into his hand, and Archy's black face shone with delight. Putting the boots under his arm he came back to where his master lay on the ground.

"Mauss Bob, de Lor' 'll pervide for all what puts trus' in Him. Heah 's de boots."

As Archy spoke he handed his master the pair of boots he had purchased from the Confederate.

"Where did you get those, Archy, and what did you give for them?" asked Robert, as he held up the boots.

"I bought dem from dat young white man what's walking aroun' in his stockin' feet. Mighty sorry for him, but he's got de gold."

"Why, where did you get the gold, Archy?"

"Why, Mauss Robut, do n't yeh 'member, de night we left home, ole mauss gabe me a whole lot of money in gold. I gabe one-half to Susie, poor chile, an' kep' de res', thinkin' yeh might want it some day; an' now, tank de Lor', de day hab come."

"Why, Archy," said Robert, laughing, "you surely do not thank the Lord for this opportunity of using your money?"

"No, Mauss Robut, yeh knows all 'bout dat. I'd die to see yeh back wid de boys agin, but I'm glad, as yeh's pris'ner, I'm along to help yeh."

"It would indeed ease the trials that I am satisfied lie before us if I felt sure we could be together. I think, however, that before twenty-four hours you and I will be parted. I want to prepare you for this, Archy. Heretofore they have sold or used for their own purposes all the colored servants of Union officers they have captured. We cannot hope your case will be an exception."

"No, Mauss Robut," interrupted Archy, with a tremulous voice; "I do n't spect to be a 'ception, but when yeh gets home tell Susey whar I is, an' kar for de pickaninnies."

Robert laid his hand kindly on the faithful fellow's shoulder.

"Archy, I hope we may get home together. The war will soon end, and I will find you out, and if I cannot, you must hunt up some Union soldier and get him to write to me at Brazoria. Do whatever they may

require of you, Archy. It will only be for a short time.”

“De good Lor’ ’ll watch me, Mauss Robut. But,” he added, as if ashamed of calling attention to his own case, “I does n’t keer fur meself. I ’se thinkin’ about yeh, Mauss Robut, an’ what yeh ’s got to suffer, an’ I not near !”

“Well, Archy, now that I have boots I feel better. Come, do n’t get down-hearted. If they do not part us before to-morrow night I think we can give them the slip.”

The last was said in a whisper, but it caused a wonderful change in Archy’s face as he turned it full on his master, and said in a low, earnest voice, “May de good Lor’ jes’ give us half a chance.”

Archy then fumbled around in his pocket, and at length pulled out a red bandana, which he slipped unnoticed into his master’s hand.

“Why, Archy, what is this?”

“Dat ar ’s de res’ of de gold.”

“I know, Archy, but I cannot take this. You will need it more than I.”

“No, mauss, I ’s got more ’n two hundred dollars in greenbacks. I s’e been very savin’. Dey stole yer money. Keep dat, please, Mauss Robut. I ’ll feel better.”

This was said in a tone that Robert could not refuse and leave poor Archy anything but miserable, so he hid the red handkerchief carefully away—first, however, with Archy’s consent, taking out two pieces, which he found an opportunity to give to the brave Ohio orderly.

That was a miserable night. The wind blew the light sand in blinding clouds through the open sides

and glassless windows of the "guard-house." The stock of fuel was exhausted early in the night, and the men gathered about the dying embers, some narrating with brutal oaths their adventures in love and war, and others freely commenting on the result of the war. The few Yankees crowded together, and their part of the floor was respected by their desperate fellow-prisoners. Through the night the sleep of Robert was often disturbed by the reliefs and the shouts of the guards as they announced the hours, ever closing with the chilling words, "All's well."

Morning came, and with it a small ration of corn-bread and bacon; but the men were hungry, and some ate the meat without cooking. Archy was toasting some before the fire on a forked stick, when an officer entered the guard-house and asked for Major Warren.

"That is my name, sir!"

"I come for your servant, sir. Where is he?"

"You will find him cooking at the fire."

Archy overheard the conversation and rose with the forked stick in his hand. He drew himself up till he seemed a head and shoulder above every man in the guard-house. His wide nostrils dilated, and the left arm, held rigidly by his side, and the knotted muscles and clenched hand gave him an air of fierce determination that quite startled the officer.

"What is your name, boy?" demanded the officer.

"I'm not a boy, sir. I'm a man!" As Archy replied he strode to his master's side and turned his burning black eyes on the rebel.

"I asked you your name! No d——d airs, boy, to me. I ain't one of those men as kin be sassed by a nigger!"

“My servant’s name is Archy Warren,” said Robert as he laid his hand on the still rigid left arm. “He has his freedom papers, and I demand that he be treated as a prisoner, and not as a slave.”

“Stuff! You Yanks confiscate our niggers—of course we’re agoin’ to feed yours an’ dress ’em an’ send ’em back clean an’ greasy; that’s jes’ like us. Come with me, boy.” As the rebel spoke he walked toward the door and motioned Archy to follow.

“Go, Archy, my brave boy. Be prudent. God bless you! A short time, Archy, and all will be well.” Robert’s voice grew husky as he clasped the faithful, ever-ready hand.

“God bless yeh, Mauss Bob! May yeh git back safe to de ole home; an’ if I neber comes back kar fur Susey an’ de piccaninnies.” Archy raised his master’s hand to his lips and left on the bronzed fingers two great tears, then he pulled on his cap and walked out, with the rebel leading. Down to a little frame building near the depot they walked and entered. A number of clerks, busy at rough, extemporized desks, and a number of officers, smoking and chewing about the room, turned to greet the officer and stare with a pro-slavery admiration on the powerful negro who accompanied him.

“By the great Confederacy, Chauncy, that’s a prize. There’s ten thousand dollars paper currency in that fellow if there’s a cent.”

The man that spoke wore on his upturned coat collar the single star of a major, and on his puffy, patch-haired face the evidences of large quantities of bad whisky.

“He’ll do, major, though he’s a sassy cuss, ar

will need takin' down afore we kin git any good out of him. The cussed Yanks have spoiled him. Why, what do you 'spose the black dog said to me when I called him a boy this morning?"

"Why, perhaps he told you he was a girl," said the major, while his companions joined him in a laugh at what he deemed a very good joke.

"No," said Lieutenant Chauncy, getting red in the face, as if the very memory of Archy's insolence roused his indignation. "No; he looked as savage as an alligator, and told me he was a man."

Another burst of laughter greeted this announcement, while Archy, cap in hand, looked at the speaker unmoved.

"About fifty, laid on good and strong, would do him right smart good," added Chauncy, "an' he 'll git it afore we git through with him."

"I understand that fellow Warren is to be tried. Hope to Heaven they 'll hang him," said the major.

"Yes, they start him for Mobile to-night. Scott is down there, and the d—d Yank has n't much to hope from General Maury."

As the lieutenant closed he looked at Archy, and seemed alarmed at the change in his appearance. His arms hung powerless by his side. The defiant air was gone. His head dropped on his breast, and his lips were parted, showing his white teeth, which seemed to increase the look of fear on his face.

"What 's wrong, boy?" demanded Chauncy, shaking him.

"Nothin', mausser, but don't hurt Mauss Robot. He neber did no wrong!"

"The devil you say! Now that's good. So disin-

terested! You've seen the last of him, and I'll give you some advice boy. If you wish to keep the skin of your back sound, just keep your mouth shut about that hound Warren."

"I would n't let that fellow go down to Meridian without keer, Chauncy," suggested the major; "he's bin long enough with the Yanks to be devilish; put on the irons."

One of the clerks heard this, and volunteered the information that there were handcuffs and a ball and chain under his desk—"the same," he said, "that Mr. King's boy Bill had on when he was shot."

The handcuffs were taken out, and the clerk drew forth the chain, with the ankle-ring at one end and the ponderous ball at the other.

"Don't pud dem on me, mausser. I'll not run off. I'll keep my word when I says so." As Archy spoke he drew back with a shudder from the handcuffs and chain.

"Here, none of your cussed gab. I'm agoin' to guard agin your gittin' off. I jis' know how much confidence to give to niggers like you!" As Chauncy spoke, he picked up the handcuffs and drew the ball and chain after him. Approaching Archy, he demanded, "Hold out your hands, boy!"

With his head still bowed on his breast, Archy reached out his stalwart arms, and with a sudden click the handcuffs sprung upon his wrists.

"Thar's only one ring, but I don't think you'll undertake to run off with an eighty-pound ball on your leg."

As Chauncy spoke, he stooped and fastened the ring to Archy's ankle, and drew out the chain with the ponderous ball to its full length.

“The train starts for Meridian in about twenty minutes. Are you going to send the nigger down?” asked the major.

“Yes, I reckon on that now. Warren and the res’ of ’em are goin’ down to-night. Kelton’s sale comes off to-morrow. I think we kin run this nigger in without any trouble. Good-by, major, we mus’ be off. Follow me, boy.” Chauncy motioned toward the door as he passed out, and Archy stooped and gathered up the chain. To ordinary men the ball would have rendered locomotion impossible, but he picked it up like a plaything, with his manacled hands, and throwing it over his shoulder he strode out of the room, his head still bowed on his breast, and the rattling of the great chain keeping time to his steps.

There were horses on the car in which they placed the black man, and every precaution taken was for the safety of the horses. Archy envied them their free limbs as he dropped the ball on the floor, and coiled up his chain and sat down beside it. He had been a slave without bonds heretofore, and a servant without knowing a master, for every act had been the impulse of his unselfish love. Now, for the first time in his life, he felt himself a slave, and the very thought seemed to crush his free spirit. The cars rolled on, and gradually he forgot himself, forgot his handcuffs and the ball and chain, forgot to surmise his dreaded, uncertain fate, and his mind reverted to Robert.

He wondered if the boots would fit him. Would they hang him in Mobile? How were his poor, blistered, sand-rubbed feet? He would escape if he got a chance—that was just like Mauss Robert. Yes, and

It was like himself, he would watch for the moment when the irons were off hands and legs to make an effort for freedom. What would Susey and the pickaninnies think if they knew of his position? As Archy thought of this, he thanked God that the power to look beyond our own surroundings, and to pierce the future, was not given to man. Poor Susey, she was his in his pure natural love, but another's in everything else. He hated the very name of Townsend, so cowardly, cruel, and mean.

Thus his mind wandered as the cars rolled on so slowly over the broken, uncared-for road. Gradually the light lessened and the dark night came, and the cars kept going till they reached Meridian, where some men came, and Archy heard the anxious directions about the horses, and the animals were led carefully out with words of fond encouragement and endearing names as they descended the sloping gangway.

"Come out here, nigger!" called a voice, and Archy stooped and picked up the heavy ball, and, with the chain rattling as he moved, he descended the gangway and followed the long, cadaverous man who assumed charge of him. The unpaved streets were very sandy and heavy. The night was dark, and pattering drops, with gloomy palpitations of the south wind, threatened a rain. The long man, uncumbered by hand-cuffs or chains, strode rapidly along, while Archy, with the ring eating into his ankle at every step, and his ironed wrists tortured as they held the heavy ball on his shoulder, struggled on in the hope of keeping up. Once he stumbled and the ball fell, and with a savage oath the long man turned and struck him as he was picking it up. Archy again re-

sumed his journey, the sweat standing in great beads on his black forehead, and the excruciating pain in wrists and ankle growing more intense. He had never been struck before, and his spirit, so simple and affectionate, rose against the insult. Had he been free as to his limbs, it would have fared badly with the long man then; as it was he choked down the fierce words that rose to his lips, and kept on.

They reached the pen, a sort of cattle inclosure with a number of miserable huts about it, and Archy was registered at the gate, then turned in, with another imprecation from the long white man, who cursed him for a "lazy black dog." There were a number of negroes inside, of every age and sex, all booked for the morrow's sale. A few powerful-looking fellows were chained, and one lay on the ground with a gag in his mouth and his limbs bound, while beside him, with her little ones nestling near her, his wife sat.

An old woman, torn from her son, swayed herself back and forth near the red fire, and a mother in a blind stupor, and with her wailing moans, held her hands crossed on the breast from which a child had been torn. It was a Sabbath night, and in a thousand churches the southern people gathered to invoke God's blessing on their cause; and while the masters prayed at the altar the slaves groaned in the pen, and He who called his followers from among the poor and lowly heard the groans.

Archy was hungry, and a score of willing hands were ready to divide with him their scanty fare; and after he had eaten they gathered about to hear of freedom—gradually coming nearer—and to draw comfort, in their distress, from the firm words of the

manacled black man. Archy's ankle and wrists were sore, and the ball, which in the morning seemed to his giant strength a toy, now hung to him like a very incubus. On a heap of corn husks in one of the cabins he lay down, and with troubled dreams about his master, and the wife and little ones in Texas, he slept till morning. A coarse ration of corn-bread was then served out, and a man came in who saw that all the slaves washed themselves preparatory to the sale. The irons were taken off, bringing to body and spirit a feeling of such relief that Archy could have kissed the hand that did it. The sale took place in the pen, into which, by ten o'clock, had gathered old planters to purchase, and young men to joke—old planters that the previous night had invoked God to aid them, and young men armed in the name of freedom and country. Why picture that scene of heart-rending, the parting of mother and babes, wife and husband, and life-long friends—poor in everything, save that wealth of affection which a common suffering gives? Archy's turn came; and as the Confederate States Government owned him, the receiver for that district sold him for the Government, the money to be appropriated to the southern cause. The black man, barefooted, stood on the block, with his head cast down, while the auctioneer pointed to what every spectator could see, the wonderful physique of the man.

“Make him take off his shirt,” said a man whom Archy recognized as the long, cadaverous man of the previous evening. The request of the long man was the demand of the auctioneer. Archy fastened his braces around his waist and took off his shirt; then he folded his arms, so indicative of strength, on his

heavily-muscled chest, and with one foot advanced on the block, he stood a slave-god before his worshipers.

"Looks like an onery-dispositioned nigger," said one man. "Strong as a lion and harmless as a lamb," said the auctioneer, as he prepared for the bids. The competition was sharp, and at length the long man secured the purchase for nine thousand dollars, a sum at which Archy was deemed "dirt cheap," comparing Confederate money with gold; but even at that time the most sanguine rebels considered the possibility of Union success, and in such case the certainty of freedom to all men.

That night Archy was sent to a plantation between York and Meridian, the long man warning him as they started that "it would n't do nohow to put on any airs with him; he could n't stan' a sassy nigger; he wanted work, and he (Archy) mus' come right down an' do it; mus' get rid of d——d Yankee notions an' behave, an' then it'd be well enough."

"Wid de help ob de Lor,' maussa, I'll try to do right," said Archy, as he passed out, feeling for the first time in his life that he was a slave.

CHAPTER XL.

A MIGHTY MAN OF WAR.

The day following that on which Archy had been sold at Meridian, his master passed through the same place in charge of Lieutenant Garrett, en route to Mobile. The lieutenant was a fiery, little fellow, with a scrubby, red moustache and hair of the same color. He kept his belt buckled so tight about his waist that it seemed to force all his digestive organs into his protruding breast, and gave his face a full, flushed appearance, as if he were determined to hold his breath or burst. His reddish-gray, protruding eyes would warrant this suspicion. He looked like a human torpedo filled with the most dangerous ingredients, needing but a spark to explode him or wrap his glowing body in flames. He had a military strut that was very effective, and though only five feet two, and short in the legs, he walked with a stride that threatened to split him at each fierce step. He carried his left side, where hung his huge sword, a little in advance of his right, like a sentinel advancing to challenge. That portion of his arms not swallowed up in a pair of cavernous, bell-mouthed gauntlets was decorated with a labyrinth of gold lace, so intricate in its glittering windings that a ground plan of the affair would far eclipse the once famed Cretan arrangement. The lieutenant wore a cap with two gold braids

about the circumference, and another maze of lace about the little, round button on top, like the dear castle-puzzle of our childhood. Like the Queen's Life-Guards, and other nobby soldiers, the cap was four sizes too small, and was held on the side of the round, red head by a strap so short as only to reach the under lip, which the lieutenant kept protruded in a very grim and martial manner in order to hold his cap on. As he chewed tobacco and spat very freely, the strap was continually getting into his mouth and interfering with the proper ejection of the amber saliva, so that much of it fell short, and left its mark on the doubled-breasted front of the coat, where the dazzling buttons, marked "C. S. A.," strained about the mighty chest. This description, though not applicable to all, is accurate as to a conspicuous class of Southern line officers. Garrett had heard about Warren, and was determined that his prisoner should know he had a determined fellow to care for him, so he paced the car, despite the fact that his sword got mixed up with the arms of the seats and passengers, and each time he passed his prisoner he stared at him with a look which seemed to say: "It won't pay, sir, to attempt any d—d nonsense with Lieutenant Garrett. Bet your life on that, sir?"

The ride was very long, the train very slow, and the only break in the monotony was when an officer with a half dozen soldiers at his heels would pass through the cars to examine the papers of the passengers. At such times Garrett had to show his orders, which he always did in the presence of his prisoner, with his breast stuck out, his head thrown back, and one foot advanced, like a knight errant in a gas-fixtured store,

while his gauntleted left hand played nervously with the brass butt of his monstrous sword.

Robert Warren at the first measured the man exactly, but he was too much depressed to take advantage of his knowledge, which fact the lieutenant interpreted into fear, and this gave him a regard for his prisoner, for it flattered his own vanity.

Below Meridian Robert motioned to the lieutenant, and that individual advanced and struck an attitude, without noticing the seat Robert had made for him.

"Lieutenant, when do you expect to reach Mobile?"

"To-night, sir."

"Is there a place in Mobile exclusively for Yankee prisoners?"

"No, sir; except the slave pen."

"Oh, that will do very well. By the way, lieutenant, you must be hungry. Do we stop at any place where we can get something to eat and drink before reaching Mobile?"

The lieutenant softened a little. This Yankee was a creature something like himself. He was subject to hunger and thirst. Thirst! The very thought of the Yankee's thirsting unbent the fiery lieutenant, and he gradually edged nearer, and finally slid into the seat with his sword between his legs.

"Yes, sir—yes, major. We stop at a station, sir, after a while. Are you thirsty?"

"Thirsty! Very; and more hungry."

"We have something to eat on the cars, but nothing except water to drink, sir."

"I am obliged, lieutenant, but I can wait till we reach the place you alluded to, when I will be obliged, if you permit me, to purchase some food."

“Certainly, sir. But, sir, you must not get from under my eyes.” The lieutenant rose as he spoke and looked down on his prisoner, though his prominent eyes had lost much of their fierceness, and he permitted the strap of his cap to slip from under his lip and hang under his pug nose.

It was after dark when the wheezy engine stopped, and the crowd of hungry passengers rushed toward one of the three frame houses near the station, where a black man was hammering a gong with terrific energy.

“Stand by me, sir. Keep close alongside, sir.” As the lieutenant ejaculated this he laid his hand on Robert’s arm, as if its weight would deter him from attempting to escape, and they moved along with the crowd toward the house where the gong was sounding. The lieutenant walked up to a man, whom he appeared to know, and said :

“Gunning, I have a prisoner——” Before the lieutenant could finish the sentence, Gunning interrupted him with an oath, adding :

“Bully for you, lieutenant. Let’s see him.”

“I want you to give him some supper,” said the lieutenant, pointing to the prisoner.

“Now see heah, Mr. Garrett.” Gunning assumed a dignified attitude. “I’m willin’ to do all I can for the Confederacy an’ the soldiers, but cuss me if I’m agoin’ to let any Yank eat at my table.”

“I will pay you, sir, for the food, and as to eating at your table, I assure you I do not desire it. I want something to eat,” said Robert, in a very cool tone.

“The fact is, Gunning, how am I to eat? I must have this prisoner under my eye all the time, you see,

and I do n't want to starve him just because he's so unfortunate as to be a Yank."

"Well, hurry up; I'll give him a place at the carving table, and watch him myself."

Robert was hurriedly conducted to the table, where a negro was carving, and directly back of him the fiery Garrett sat down to a supper anything but conducive to digestion, for the meat, the sweet potatoes, and corn-bread were all cooked in that king of culinary articles in a Southern kitchen—the frying-pan.

The negro who stood filling the plates with tough steak at the carving-table was most attentive to the prisoner, and took occasion to ask, in a whisper:

"When 's de res' a comin'?"

"Soon," said Robert, in a low voice; "but not prisoners."

"Tank de Lor'!" and the negro rolled up his eyes and worked more energetically among the steak and sweet potatoes.

Garrett had one Southern characteristic, viz: liberality. He would not let the prisoner pay for what he had eaten, and he succeeded in getting some cigars and a bottle of bad whisky, which he intended the prisoner should partake of, but which the prisoner really could not do, though he often went through the motions.

Before they reached Mobile, early next morning, the lieutenant was redder than ever. His face fairly burned under the influence of the fiery whisky. He took occasion during the night to inform his prisoner that his was a constitution of iron, that he never felt fatigued; could go for a week without sleep, and drink all the time. This, he further informed the

prisoner, was the result of blood. "I have lots of good blood in me, sir. My grandfather you may have heard of—Garrett; same name's mine, sir."

The prisoner felt certain he had heard of the distinguished grandfather, but could not remember the connection.

"He was sure of his man, sir, at forty paces, and it broke his heart when he got the palsy at seventy-five."

"A very remarkable man, lieutenant," the prisoner thought it proper to say.

"Yes, sir, but I'm his equal. I never went back of my word, sir, in an affair of that kind."

In this strain the lieutenant kept on the greater part of the night. By the following morning they reached Mobile, the lieutenant's appearance throwing very strong suspicions on his boasted powers of endurance.

"I must take you at once, sir, to Major Dennis, the provost marshal," said the lieutenant.

"All right, lieutenant, I feel safe in your hands."

Major Dennis's office was near the Battle House, some distance from the depot, and therefore the little lieutenant and the big prisoner went—in a carriage. The major was not in when they arrived, but soon put in an appearance. The lieutenant in the meantime, feeling that a great weight was lifted off his shoulders, collapsed like a little red balloon, and dropping his head on his sunken bosom he snored audibly.

Major Dennis was a lawyer-like, gentlemanly fellow, about forty years of age, with heavy, brown whiskers, and a deliberate way of speaking, in striking contrast to the lieutenant, who woke up when the major en-

tered, and looked as wide awake as his red eyes and purple face would let him. The work of transferring the prisoner was short, when Major Dennis sent for a guard. Then turning to the prisoner, he said :

“ We have heard much of you, Major Warren, and I am heartily glad you are here.”

“ You are very kind, sir, but I deserve no credit for the visit.”

The provost marshal formed his lips as if about to smile, but instead, a dry expression, that might pass for anything, was produced.

“ We will send you on to Montgomery to-morrow, sir, and forward the charges with you.”

“ Might I ask what charges?”

“ I have no objections to saying you are accused, and I think with reason, of having entered the Confederate lines at certain times disguised as a friend, for the purpose of spying.”

“ Supposing what you say to be true, was I caught in your uniform? Was I captured trying to ply the friend?”

“ I believe not.”

“ I am sure I was not. I had given fight to some of your people below Vicksburg, and was returning with them, when I was scooped up ahead of my command. However, this is no place, nor is this the time to defend myself. I have no fears of a trial, if it be fair.”

“ Fair it certainly will be. But, sir, we have more feeling against men of your class, born and raised in the South, as I learn you were, than against regular Yankees.”

“ On the same principle, I suppose, you have more

love for northern men fighting on your side than you have for those to the manner born."

"We do not discriminate. Patriots are patriots."

As the provost marshal closed speaking, a sergeant, accompanied by three armed men, entered. The sergeant was called aside for his instructions. Then Robert Warren shook hands with the lieutenant, bowed to the provost marshal, and with the sergeant by his side, and the three armed men behind, he walked into the street, and followed by the taunts and jeers of the crowd that gathered to see him, he reached the prison.

It could not be worse than the place at Brandon. It was certainly better than the close car, reeking with the smell of smoke and whisky, and dinned by vulgar jokes, and ribald songs, and oaths most blasphemous.

"Have you any valuables about you?" asked the turnkey, with a grim smile.

"Search and see for yourself," said Robert, placing himself in an attitude to facilitate the investigation if the turnkey desired.

"You are too willin'. If you got down to this jail with anything but your good name, you'd jest be the luckiest Yank I've come across since I've been keepin' boardin' house."

The turnkey led the way as he spoke, and entering a long corridor, the guards remained behind. Grated doors, with the dim light just visible inside, were ranged on either hand, and the sound of their footsteps echoed cold and hollow. Here and there a face peered through the gratings.

"Hello, comrade!" shouted a voice through one of the doors.

“How is God’s country?”

“All is well in God’s country,” replied Robert, feeling a thrill of joy as he heard what he felt was a comrade’s voice.

At the further end of the hall, the turnkey stopped, and opened a door.

“This ain’t a nice place, but it’s all alone. I’d rather give you a better room, but the fact is I’ve got to obey orders. Major Dennis knows every corner here, and he selected this for you.”

“Oh, it will do well enough. I go to Montgomery to-morrow, and as I am tired the darkness will be all the better for sleep.”

“Wall, maybe you’ll go to Montgomery to-morrow. People may change their minds. Hold up awhile an’ I’ll send your breakfast. Them’s the orders, though it’s right smart after breakfast now.”

Robert walked into the cell, and the heavy door grated behind him, and closed with a bang that echoed with a painful effect along the corridor. An iron bedstead with a mattress, a dirty pillow and a grey blanket on it, a tin wash-basin and a coarse horn comb chained like prisoners to staples in the wall, an earthen pitcher and a tin cup constituted the furniture of the cell. The small aperture through which the light came was heavily barred, though too small of itself to permit the exit of a man’s body. The walls were very damp and dark, the floor was of sheet iron, and the ceiling out of reach even when standing on the bed.

“Not an inviting place, to be sure. It would be difficult to get out of here, that’s true; but there is no use in thinking of escape now. To-morrow I start

for Montgomery ; then will come my time." As Robert thought this over he threw himself on the hard mattress with a sigh of relief. He had scarcely done so when he heard a knock at his door, and said "Come in !"

"Not much ; heah, Yank, come to the door !"

Robert obeyed the voice. The grating opened on a hinge, and through the aperture a hand was thrust with a tin plate filled with steaming beans. Robert seized it, and the hand came back with a piece of corn-bread. "Hand out that ar pitcher for water."

Robert passed out the pitcher and it was handed back filled with water.

"Thar, Yank, 'conomize on that till to-morrow morning."

The grating swung to with a metallic thug, and the steps of the man went ringing down the corridor.

"That's not the turnkey that brought me here," said Robert to himself as he sat on the bed, and with the iron spoon tried to eat the insipid beans. He gave the task up as hopeless. He did not feel hungry. So he pulled off his boots and coat, loosened his clothing, and stretched himself on the iron bedstead, which he found about six inches too short, but he slept.

When he awoke the glimpse of far-off blue sky seemed to have faded into a leaden grey. The cell was much darker, and he felt a chilly feeling creeping over him like a return of the fever from which he had just recovered.

He managed to eat some of the corn-bread and beans, then he stood up near the window and watched the grey dying out, and darkness coming on. The

cell was very black, and the utter stillness very oppressive. "I certainly could not stand this long. I wish it were morning." Robert spoke aloud—the very sound was a comfort—and walked back to the bed. He lay down, and for hours memory was busy with the past. He began with memory and childhood; youth and manhood marched past in review; familiar faces and places lit up the panorama at times, while scenes of sorrow and days of suffering added to the gloomy setting of the picture.

"What a blessing a watch and candle would be. I wonder what time it is." He rose and peeped out through the grated door into the black corridor; he heard a low, hollow cough away down on the opposite side. "That chap ought to be in the hospital. Consumption is a fearful thing, and in such a place."

He stood and heard the cough again and again, and sad as was the sound it brought him comfort and company. It told him there was a fellow creature near him suffering more than he was, and though the most unselfish of men, the very thought was a comparative pleasure.

"Who can the poor fellow be?" thought Robert. "A criminal, no doubt, who has been in here a long time. Some wretch who, under circumstances of life and education that would have hung the judge who sentenced him, had he been subjected to them, has been sent here for the good of society. He is friendless and poor, I am certain; had he wealth he would never have reached here; had he friends he would not remain here. I wish I could aid him. Justice is as blind as Love, and about as reasonable. Ah, me!"

Again the painful cough was heard: there was

something in the sound that told Robert it was that of a young man. "I wonder if he is black or white? But no matter, I wish I could aid him." Robert felt the belt next to his body, where was secreted the gold Archy had given him. "A barrier separates us, and the suffering man will die, unknowing the vicinity of a friend. He coughs with great pain. What if he were a Yankee—a comrade kept here by the whim of his jailors." The very thought increased Robert's chill, and he walked back to the bed and tried to shut out the sound—it was too horribly suggestive.

At times during the long night Robert slept, but his sleep was broken and disturbed by wild dreams and gloomy surroundings.

It was a relief when morning came, and with the light the heavy, echoing tread of the turnkey. As he approached, Robert whispered to himself: "Thank God, this is the last night here."

Again there was the sound of unfastening the grate, and the gray arm was inserted through the opening.

"Hand out them things!"

"What things?"

"Confound you, them tin things."

"All right; do n't get mad."

The "tin things" with the cold beans and hard corn-bread were passed out.

"Oh, dainty, are you?" said the voice outside; "all right, you'll be glad to eat this bimeby." There was a sound outside of stirring in a tin bucket; then the hand was passed in with the plate and some hot beans, and then came the corn-bread and the demand for the pitcher and slop-pail. They were passed out, and the pitcher handed back again filled with water. There was

some person with the turnkey—"a servant, no doubt, to help him carry the articles around," thought Robert. The grating closed, and the turnkey came back, after having walked off some distance, and said through the door, "I'll be back before night."

"When do you start me for Montgomery?"

"For Montgomery?"

"Yes."

The turnkey walked away, and his low "Ha, ha, ha!" struck on Robert's ears as no sound ever had before. He was hungry, and he sat down and ate the beans, so hard and insipid, and tried to gnaw the softer part of the heavy corn-bread.

The turnkey walked back again, uttering a laugh, the mockery and hollowness of which was increased by the stillness which it broke and the echoes which it started.

"We'll tell ye in plenty time ter pack yer trunk."

The stillness of night is always bearable because expected; the same stillness to an active nature in the day is ever oppressive. Robert walked back to the bed and sat down, with his face between his hands.

"It would be horrible," he thought, "to remain here long. I wonder if that fellow Dennis lied. It would be just like the cold-blooded wretch!" He chased the suspicion from his mind, and walked back and forth in his cramped cell, blaming himself for not having gotten off or attempted it when on his way to Mobile. The hours slipped past like a monotonous age, and the red clouds, visible through the little barred aperture in his cell, told him the sun was setting in the outer world. He wanted to see the sun, and drawing the iron bedstead near the window,

he stood upon it and looked out. A blank, cold wall, without windows or doors, like a face without eyes, stopped his vision a few yards distant. So he turned his eyes up, resting his arm on the tunnel-like approach to the window, and watched the changes in sky and clouds till the cold gray was lost in the darkness; and, though the world around him was hidden by the walls and the night, the very darkness concealed far off the glory of distant worlds, and the star-light softened the shadows of the cell.

"Come down from thar, I say! Thar's no use in them kinder tricks!"

Robert got down, pushed back the bed, and, groping toward the door, he felt the arm protruding through the grating, and the voice outside asking for "them tins."

"Why did they not send me to Montgomery today, as the provost marshal promised?" asked Robert.

"It ain't for me ter say why. I gits orders an' I obeys 'em. My 'pinion is you 'll breathe more Mobile than Montgomery air in the next year, if yeh kin hold out."

"What makes you think so?"

"Wall, we've got another chap over here Yeh may hear him a-hacking at night. He ain't a man yet, but he's chuck full of devil. He was sent down here from Tennessee or Georgia, whar he wuz captured, a kind o' spyin'. They wuz agoin' ter hang him, but they reckoned it 'ed be more Christian ter keep him here."

"That was very kind. What might the young man's name be?"

"He's registered as Edward Dawn; a yaller-

headed whelp as ever lived, an' as proud an' sassy as if he was agwine ter live a thousand years."

The turnkey, thanks to the darkness, could not see the expression on Robert's face.

"It is a bad thing to be in jail; but I am thankful that I have a man as kind as you to be my keeper."

"Wall, I do my duty, I reckon," said the turnkey, in a softer tone, "an' it ain't my duty to talk to you."

He was about to walk away, having passed in the corn-bread and beans, but Robert called to him; it was such a joy to have some one to talk to.

"I appreciate your position, my dear fellow. I am sorry we are enemies. You know how horrible it is to be alone. Trust me in one thing, and if I live to leave this cell, or even before, my word for it you will not regret it."

"Wall, what do you want, a candle?"

"God knows a candle would be a great blessing, but it is not that. Have you a brother?"

"Yes, two of 'em, an' bully boys they is!"

"Imagine one of your brothers a prisoner in the hands of the Yankees, in a black cell, with his fate uncertain, and his heart yearning for the voice of a friend."

"Wall, what of it?"

"If I were the turnkey, and a southern man were in a cell near your brother's, would you not want me to let men who fought in the same cause meet, and comfort each other, at least by their words?"

"Wall, I might want you to do a great many things that wan't jes' squar."

The turnkey walked off, and the soft footsteps of

the person carrying the food followed after him. The door opened at the farther end of the corridor, then closed with a startling bang. The key grated in the lock, the echoes died out, and all was still in the living grave.

Robert could not eat, and as he sat on his bed thinking about the brave "Little Ned," the old man's pet—Tennessee's boy-brother—he heard the painful hacking cough again, and he recognized something familiar in the sound. He stood near the grating, not daring to carry out the promptings of his heart by calling Ned and announcing his own presence. He remained near the door he knew not how long, it might have been hours. He felt himself dozing and only his hold of the bars kept him from falling to the ground.

He was about to let go his hold and feel his way to the bed, when his hand was seized on the bar, and he heard a low "Hush!" His first impulse was to spring back.

"Who is there?" he asked in a whisper.

"Me, mauss—Yalla Jack. I's a frien'."

"How did you get in here?"

"I totes de beans fur Mr. Philips, de turnkey. I heerd yeh to-day. I's been a comin' in ebry night, a fotchin' tings to dat ar' poor chile."

"Is it Ned Dawn?"

"Yes, mauss. I crawls down de flume. I's smaller dan yeh tinks from my talk."

"A very diminutive mortal this must be," thought Robert, as the low, soft voice ceased.

"Yellow Jack, is it possible for me to get out of here, with your help?"

“’Fraid not, mauss. Yer too big, but anything I kin do, led me know.”

“Very well, go at once to Ned Dawn’s cell and tell him I am here—his old captain, Warren. He must make no noise.”

“All right, mauss.”

Robert listened and in a few seconds there was a sound like a pin-scratch in the direction from which had come the coughing.

A low buz, a suppressed cough, and in a few minutes, under his own cell door, came the scratch and the “hush,” as before.

“Gosh, mauss, dat boy’s right smart sorry ye’s heah, but it’ll do ’im right smart good ter know it. He loves ye a pile, I tell yeh.”

“Yellow Jack?”

“Yes, mauss.”

“If I give you a piece of gold, ten dollars, could you get me a Bible and some candles, and a pen and paper?”

“I reckon so, mauss. But I kin get ’em widout de money.”

“Have you money of your own?”

“No mauss, but Pete, de Dutchman, gibbs me all I want fur de Yankees.”

“Could you get him to give you some meat and a bottle of wine for that poor boy?”

“Yes, mauss, I brings him meat ebery night. Don’t know as how I could get a bottle trough de flume.”

“Surely you are larger than a bottle?”

The shadow of a laugh came from below the door.

“I’ll try to git him de wine.”

“Here, give this money to the Dutchman; tell him what I want.”

Robert dropped the coin into the hat that was held up for it outside. "Give my love to little Ned, and come every night."

"I'll try mighty hard, mauss. To-morrow night I'll be along, an' den I'll tell yeh what dey says 'bout a hangin' ob yeh."

Robert could not hear the retreat, though he felt that "Yellow Jack," the mysterious, had slipped away. He stretched himself on the bed, happier for the kind words of the negro, and building castles and forming plans from the slight material furnished by the slave.

CHAPTER XLI.

LITTLE NED.

The next night "Yellow Jack" was again on hand. He brought two small candles and a book, but as he brought no matches the candles were practically useless. He had a small phial filled with brandy for Ned, and a little parcel, which he informed Robert contained a pencil and some paper.

"Take the brandy over to Ned at once, with my love. He must have some every day. Tell him to take about a spoonful every three hours when awake."

"Yellow Jack" was gone for a few minutes, and returned to say, "Ned wanted the captain to drink the brandy."

"Tell that boy that I have given my orders about the brandy, and they must be carried out."

In a short time the black boy came back, saying, in his soft whisper :

"He says, mauss, he'll 'bey yer orders all de time, an' dat he feels much better."

Promising to return on the following night, the noiseless body moved away, and Robert stood listening for the cough. Once he heard a heavy sigh, as if from one in a troubled sleep. It came from the direction of Little Ned, and Robert felt thankful that he heard not the cough again.

The candles, book, and paper were secreted early in the morning in the mattress. When the turnkey departed, after having served the corn-bread and beans, Robert looked out and saw a little gray-headed yellow man waddling noiselessly along, a large pail in one hand and a basket in the other. He was not over four feet high, and his long body seemed to be out of all proportion to his short, muscular limbs. His head seemed, with its gray, bushy hair, to be broader and deeper than his shoulders and breast, and would have been sufficiently large for a man six feet high. His arms were very long, so much so that to keep the articles carried from dragging on the ground, he had to keep his elbows bent and carry his burden in advance. Robert tried to catch a glimpse of his face, but he passed through the door at the end of the long passage in advance of the turnkey, and Robert heard the bolts snap and rattle behind the being in whom he was more immediately interested than any person in the world.

It was a great pleasure, after fastening his hat over the grating in the door, to lie down, with his back to the light, and read the words of comfort with a feeling of delight and satisfaction never before experienced. He forgot the prison and the war in the record of the chosen people, who, through great tribulation, came up from bondage, and, after much trial, reached the Promised Land. He tried to draw a comparison between the Hebrew leaders and soldiers and those of his own land, and at times he caught himself criticising the disposition Joshua made of his men. But Joshua was successful, and Robert felt the result was the only basis on which to found a judgment.

The day passed quickly, and Robert looked out for the colored clouds that told him of evening, but the sky was overcast, and a low, moaning sound came through the grated aperture that admitted the light.

Another ration of bread and beans, and the turnkey left. Robert tried to draw him into conversation, but without success. He ate, but the food, as before, was insipid, and the want of exercise and fresh air destroyed his appetite. He lay awake listening to the wailing wind outside and watching the lurid flashes of lightning that lit up the black sky. It was about time for "Yellow Jack" to come. Robert stood by the door, his hand on the bars, expecting the touch, and listening for the low whisper that would tell him his friend had come. Now and then a cough from Ned's cell was heard, which he would answer by coughing himself; but the negro did not come. During the long hours Robert groped about his cell, returning every few minutes to the door, but there was no touch of the hand, no longed-for whisper.

"It is raining hard outside; no doubt Yellow Jack finds it impossible to get down through the 'flume,' as he calls it, or get up, for I am at a loss to know how he comes in here. The next time I see him he must bring me a file or a small saw; I can get into the hall then, and will try the dimensions of this 'flume.' If they keep me here much longer I think the 'flume' will be plenty large."

Thus soliloquizing, standing near the door, and moving about the cell, Robert watched till the cold, leaden day came, with the wind still howling and the rain beating on the bars, and entering the room in a fine spray. The book was again a pleasure, and as on

the island in the Caddo Lake, he wrote a letter to a loved one, which he felt at the time she would never see. The turnkey was less communicative than before, and when night came Robert's hungry ears were waiting for the low "hush" and "Yellow Jack's" whisper, but they came not; and as on the previous night he coughed in reply to the painful sounds from Little Ned's cell.

The next morning Robert watched the turnkey walking away, and his heart sank as he saw, instead of "Yellow Jack," a gaunt, lantern-jawed white man carrying the bucket and basket. As the door was about to close Little Ned called out:

"I want to see you, sir."

The turnkey went back, saying as he did:

"Damn you, do n't yell as if I wuz deaf; hav n't I told you about not hollerin'?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wall, do n't do it no more, if yeh want ter keep out uv the black cell."

Robert placed his ears to the bars, and he heard Little Ned in a lower voice:

"I can't stand this, sir; my breast is very sore, and my cough is worse; could n't yeh let a doctor come to see me?"

"I reckon so, but I ain't got nothin' ter do with it. Yeh wuz sent heah ter die, I reckon. Do n't know why in h—l else they gives such orders 'bout you an' that Warren. I carries out the orders."

"Very well, sir; I'll try to stand it. I do n't blame yeh; I won't complain."

Little Ned coughed again, and the turnkey walked out muttering something to himself, which Robert could not hear.

The desire to speak to Little Ned was stronger than Robert's prudence. About the middle of the day, hearing Ned cough again, he called out:

"Ned! Ned! my boy!"

"I hear yeh, captain; how are yeh?"

"I would be happier, Ned, if you had no cough."

"I'll be well soon, cap. I got a bad cold a-comin' here, an' this place has been a-killin' me."

"Where were you captured?"

"On a scout near Rome. I got separated from grandad an' Uncle Jim."

"Why did they bring you here?"

"Can't say, cap.; they talked about hangin' of me."

The door at the end of the corridor suddenly opened, and the turnkey with a number of men entered hurriedly.

"What in h—l is all this noise for? I've tried to treat you infernal Yanks well, an' heah fust chance yer a breakin' the rules."

The turnkey stopped before Little Ned's cell, and Robert saw the poor boy, so pale and emaciated, walked into the middle of the hall. He turned, and a smile lit up his thin face as he saw the 'captain' peering through the bars.

"Come, I'll put you somewares else," said the turnkey as he pushed Little Ned toward the door. Poor Ned turned his face and called out, "God bless you, cap," as the heavy door swung behind him, and the turnkey and his posse marched off as if they were guarding a dangerous giant.

Robert tried to read, but before him on the pages the thin face of brave Little Ned was ever coming up, and above the storm without and wailing winds he

heard the words. "This place has been a killin' me."

The days went past so like each other that if it were not for the pencil marks on the book that stood for days Robert would have lost all judgment of time. The days became weeks and the weeks months, and he still remained in the narrow compass of his cell. Now and then the door opened and under the eyes of the turnkey a black man went through the form of cleaning out the damp cell. But the turnkey himself grew more grim, taciturn, and monosyllabic. Robert felt his arms, so thin that the elbow joints seemed like knotty excrescences, and the skin tighten over his long, thin fingers like a yellow parchment. His limbs seemed withering away, and his ragged, dirty clothing felt baggy and uncomfortable. He tried hard to keep clean, but his hair grew long and matted, and his finger-nails looked hideous in their talon-like shape. His reason seemed to be going, and he would sit for hours counting the threads across the worn knees of his blue pants, and coughing a quick, hacking cough, that seemed to come with pain from his breast. His book, pencil, and paper were discovered and taken away. Day and night seemed alike to him. Life and death were equally indifferent. He grew childish about his food, and obeyed the turnkey's every command with a child-like dread and willingness to please. Dying before his captors not as a soldier would ask to die, bleeding on the battle-field, with his last glance resting on the flag floating above the cannon's smoke, but with strength and reason going, a crazed skeleton.

O, Thou God of mercy and justice, who saw fit for Freedom's sake, that we might better appreciate its

worth, to let tens of thousands of fathers and brothers and sons die in the cells and prison-pens of the South—poor starved skeletons—keep down all feelings of anger and revenge that rise burning in our hearts as our tongues recite and our pens indite this cursed record of a people fighting in Thy name and asking for Thy aid! But O, keep fresh the memory of the dead! Remind us when in the world's business we forget the twin sister of Religion, Liberty, of the terrible sacrifice and suffering by which it was gained.

Sixty-four came, and Robert Warren, once a giant in strength and a lion in courage, and a full man in his warm heart and good common sense, lay in the cell, his hollow cheeks flushed and his great bony chest heaving with his short, quick breathings. Beside him a tall, red-headed man, in the uniform of a major-general in the Confederate army, stood. His voice trembled, and the moisture came to his grey eyes as he looked on the skeleton prisoner.

"Major Dennis, this is the work of a low, cruel coward," said General Wharton, as he turned with a look of indignation on his bronzed face to the provost marshal.

"Excuse me, sir. I am not accustomed to being talked to in that way."

"You are not? God curse you for a cold-blooded villain."

Major Dennis cowered before the general's burning gaze.

"Why did you not shoot or hang this man, Warren, at once. He was in our way, but he deserved a brave man's treatment."

"We could not sustain the charges, and he was better in jail."

"'Tis a lie, sir. He was not better in jail. We have no right to starve, and break down, and send crazed to the grave a man we have not the right to hang."

"General Wharton, you must be responsible to me for this insult."

"D—n your craven heart, any attempt to justify your cowardly conduct, and I'll kill you on the spot."

General Wharton motioned towards the door, and the provost marshal, a little paler but evidently as collected as ever, walked out. Tearing a slip from a blank book the general hurriedly penciled a note, and sent it by a turnkey to General Maury. Then he sat on the bed and took in his own strong hand the thin, bloodless fingers of his enemy, but the man whose daring he admired as a soldier above all others.

"I wish they'd send me on to Montgomery. Where's the use waiting so long?"

As Robert spoke the general pushed back from his white forehead the matted, black hair.

"Poor Bob Warren, I knew you as a boy and a man. I once believed you bad, but from my soul I now think your every motive the prompting of principle."

"I wish they'd take care of Little Ned. That turnkey might have known it would break the old man's heart if Little Ned was to die."

"Who is this Little Ned?" asked the general of an attendant standing near.

"He's a boy as wuz captured in Georgia, or up thar. He wuz in Warren's company."

"Never mind about that; where is he now?"

"He's in the hospital, sir. The doctor sent him there a month ago."

“He did? then why, in the name of mercy, did n’t he send this man there?” pointing to Major Warren.

“Wall, reckon as how the provost marshal did n’t want it.”

As the attendant finished, General Maury, an old, soldierly-looking man, entered, and on Wharton’s explaining the situation in his strong, emphatic way, the general denied any knowledge of Warren’s condition.

“We deemed it best to keep him a prisoner, as he was a dangerous man, but the details were left to the provost marshal.”

“Yes, curse him for a cruel coward. Why, this morning he told me as a piece of information, in his cold-blooded way, that Major Warren, who comes from my part of Texas, was dying in jail, and if I wished to see him I ’d better go down at once. I did, and here is a specimen of our cruelty. Why, General Maury, can we ask God’s aid, and sanction this?”

General Maury was confused; he hesitated, then said: “I think not, General Wharton.”

“Now begin at once to undo this work. Major Warren must be cared for at once. If necessary, I will foot the bills. He must not remain here an hour, if I have to carry him off myself. There is one of his men here named Ned; put him with that man.”

General Wharton’s wishes were complied with at once, and Robert Warren was carried from the dark cell to the roomy hospital, where he was bathed and clad under General Wharton’s supervision. A nurse was engaged to attend to him, and the doctor in charge, a skillful man, was promised a liberal reward in the event of Warren’s recovery.

General Wharton remained about a week in Mobile before rejoining his command in Georgia, but before he left the doctor informed him that Warren was slowly improving, though still unconscious. For weeks Robert Warren lay, the flickering light of reason growing daily stronger, and the thin limbs slowly filling up. The doctor was as good as his promise, and the first soldier in the Confederacy could not have been better cared for.

It was the beginning of the sunny southern April, when the perfume of the budding magnolias began to load the air, and the birds to take up the songs chilled by winter, when the doctor, sitting beside Robert's bed, said:

"Major, I think you are strong enough now to move a little."

"Yes, doctor, strong enough to ride if I was back with my own men," said Robert, holding up his white hand.

There is one of your men in the next room; Ned Dawn. I fear he cannot live through the night. He wants to see you."

"It seems like a dream since poor Little Ned left the cell. How is his cough?"

"His cough is killing him, major."

"I'll go! Let me see him at once."

Robert tried to rise, but his spirit was stronger than his body. The doctor felt his pulse.

"Major, I fear you are not strong enough. Lie still on your cot, I will have it carried to where Dawn is."

The doctor soon carried out his intention; four stalwart fellows picked up the cot, and the major was placed beside little Ned. He seemed wrapped in a

peaceful sleep, his face was pale and translucent, and his thin hands clasped above his boyish, yellow head.

“Poor boy!”

“Is that the captain?”

“It is I, Little Ned.”

“Give me your hand.”

The beds were pushed closer together, and the captain clasped the pale, damp hand.

“How are you, cap?”

“Better, Ned. Are you?”

“Yes, I feel better with you near. Grandad's dead——”

“Who told you, Ned?”

“I saw him last night. His head was bleeding; but he smiled, and said, ‘Poor Little Ned, I won't be happy unless yer along.’”

“No, Ned, he's living. You'll see him again.”

“Yes, cap, up there where there's no more fightin'.” One thin finger was raised.

Through the day they lay side by side, and when evening came the setting sun filled the room with a golden glory, while the south wind scattered the incense of the spring flowers and brought the song of the birds.

“This is the good land mother spoke of. Do n't call me back, captain, I must obey. Do n't call me back.”

The moon came up full and round, so that no shadow of night came to the dying boy's cot. He rambled in his mind at times, and spoke of war as a thing gone past.

Day came, clear and fresh, and the rosy tinge of the rising sun colored the sky.

“Hold my hand, cap. There, keep me steady. Grandad is reaching for the other hand. Now let me go.”

A long breath, a fluttering of the thin lips, the bugle call came from the army beyond the river, and at the mystic angel's summons Little Ned joined the ranks of his comrades gone before.

CHAPTER XLII.

OLD FRIENDS.

One morning in the early June, the doctor entered the hospital with a joyous face; his face was even kind. God bless the doctors of both armies! in brain and feeling as a class they were the noblest of the enemy, the most unselfish of the patriots.

“Major, you are strong enough to travel now.”

“Yes, doctor, I feel all right. I have been a long time on my way to Montgomery.”

“This afternoon you start, still on your parole of honor, to report to the commanding officer there.”

“I am very sorry at the thought of leaving you, dear doctor. I wish to say, however, that there is not a man in either army, whom I would be more rejoiced to see ‘when this cruel war is over.’”

“I can say the same, major. God grant that the end may soon come, and let the result be as it may, so great is the issue, in its results on mankind, that I will cheerfully accept.”

The doctor sat down beside the major, and laid his hand on his knee.

“Do you remember the day General Wharton went to see you in jail?”

“No, doctor. I think of that place as a terrible nightmare. The memories are confused and the realities blended so with the equally horrible dreams,

that I cannot separate them. From you I have learned of Wharton's kindness. He is as honest in his convictions as he is brave in his heart. May God spare him to see the error of his ways."

"I had a letter from him a few days since. He is going back to Texas, to take a command under General Magruder, who is in charge of that department. He is particularly anxious for your recovery. By the way, you were wounded—that fearful hole in your breast—at Stone River, as your people call the battle. I was there. We call the fight Murfreesboro."

"Yes, doctor, I came near being mustered out there, and, what was to me equally hard, I lost my horse Don—one of the finest animals in the land to-day."

"Wharton got that horse subsequently. He writes me that the animal is now at Lefranc's, near Montgomery, and that gentleman is to give him to you on your personal application for him, which of course can only be at the close of the war."

"I won't swear to that, doctor, though the chances are against me. What is the news, though? I have not heard for a long time?"

"Sherman is pushing through Georgia, and Joe Johnston, with an army inferior in numbers, is bravely contesting every stream and hill where he can make a stand. Grant has been terribly worsted at Cold Harbor, and has pontooned the James, and laid siege to the key of Richmond, Petersburg. Our people are raiding around Washington, and the balance is about the same. Lincoln and McClellan are opposite candidates for the Presidency—and England, it is thought,

will intervene in behalf of the South. She must have cotton, and here is her only supply."

"I do not care much about England's attitude; the day will come when the South will detest her selfish course as the North does. She is the Israelite of nations, and would glory if she could make money from the garments of the Liberty she is helping to crush. The other part of the situation is against you. Sherman means Atlanta, and Grant will have Richmond before twelve months pass. I cannot doubt the result, doctor, without doubting the existence of a God, and that I cannot do—would not want to do and live."

"We are both honest in our convictions, major. Let the subject drop. I have carefully complied with your request about Little Ned's grave. We got the money those scoundrels stole from you in jail. It only took one-half to make the grave and inclose it properly; here is the rest—forty dollars in gold. I wish it was the medium of circulation now," said the doctor, as he pressed the money into Major Warren's hand and rose to depart.

Robert felt deeply the kindness of this good man, and, in his plans for the future, when peace came, Doctor Williamson, of Mobile, occupied a conspicuous place.

That afternoon, at his own request, his parole was surrendered, and, in company with an officer, he started for Montgomery. They took the steamer for Blakely, passing the obstructions in the harbor, and sailing past Buchanan's formidable iron-clads, destined yet to surrender to ships less invulnerable, guided by a cooler head. At Blakely they took the cars north for Montgomery. About midnight the

train stopped at Pollard, and next day Major Warren dined at Montgomery in company with Captain Loring, the officer who accompanied him.

"I wish you would take a parole, Major Warren, it would save me an unpleasant duty and be better for yourself," said the captain, as they sat smoking after dinner.

"I fully appreciate your kindness, captain; but it would not be just to you nor myself. I am determined to get away as soon as I can. The facts of my capture are unknown in the Union army, and I dread being under a cloud till I get back to explain."

"Well, I don't blame you. I presume I would do the same thing myself. Promise me, at least, that you will remain here quietly till I return in about an hour," said the captain, rising.

"Indeed, I would be an ingrate to deceive one so kind," replied the major, reaching out his hand. The captain clasped it, looked into the major's eyes, and thus they stood, breast to breast, as brothers of some mystic tie. In a whisper they exchange a few words, meaningless in themselves, but suggestive of a brotherhood extended as civilization, and whose records date back to the days of tradition.

The captain passed out, and the major resumed his segar and awaited his return. Two hours elapsed before Captain Loring returned. He was accompanied by a tall, dignified, elderly gentleman in uniform, whom he introduced as Colonel Lefranc. Robert immediately thought of Don, remembering what the doctor had told him.

"I have heard of you, major, from my friend General Wharton," said the colonel, "and the last thing

he said to me was that he wished you were back again with your own people."

"I am certainly obliged for all his kindness. I owe my life to him; and I hope we may both be spared to see the end, that I can the better show my appreciation of his services."

"I regret that you will not take a parole, major. I should be pleased, in that event, to have you spend a few days with me. I am confident we could soon have you exchanged."

"I am more thankful, colonel, than I can express; but I fear the want of exercise for mind and body, which a parole would produce, might injure me." Then laughing, he rose and walked to a mirror that hung over the mantel-piece, and, as he surveyed his pale face and reduced form, he continued, "I don't look as if I could injure you much, even if I were North. Ah, me! that sickness has made me a carpet knight."

The colonel laughed, and in his courteous way said:

"Heaven save the Confederacy from an army of such carpet-knights." Then lowering his voice, in a sadder key he said: "Major, I deplore the necessity of sending you to prison to-night. It is your own fault. We will make the jail as pleasant as possible for you, however."

"Thank you, colonel. Let it be like temperance punch."

"How is that?"

"Why, the weaker the better."

The captain gave Robert a quick, suggestive look, and all kindly laughing at what Robert called his

“sickly joke,” they descended from the room and walked around to the jail.

The room into which Robert was ushered, with its carpet and furniture, looked like anything but a cell. He subsequently learned it was a part of the jailor’s quarters. Colonel Lefranc gave directions to have the major’s every want attended to. As they passed out the captain said, in a low voice: “You will see me again, at eleven to-night.” Robert heard, and his heart gave a bound of joy. There was a something in the captain’s manner that spoke of an approaching deliverance.

Anxiously Robert paced the room, and tried to read the books so thoughtfully provided, but he seemed more a prisoner now than when, in Mobile, he stood on the iron bed and tried to catch beyond the blank wall a glimpse of the setting sun. Then he would have run any risk for freedom; now bonds of kindness and a load of gratitude were on him harder to break and remove than the restraints of the cold-blooded Dennis. Eleven o’clock came, as he heard by the clock in the adjacent steeple, and no captain. Slowly twelve came, and with the last clang of the bell he heard an emphatic rap at his door. In answer to his “Come in!” the door opened and a bearded man, with a slouched hat and heavy riding boots, stepped to his side, and in a low, gruff voice said:

“Now is your time! Follow me!”

Quick as a flash Robert put on his hat and threw over his shoulders the gray cape the doctor had so kindly insisted on his taking.

“I am ready!”

“This way!”

He followed the guide down stairs, out into the star-lit, quiet street.

“Walk by my side.” As his guide spoke the rapidity and length of his strides increased, and his spurred heels came down with a fierce emphasis at each strong step. Out through the town they quickly passed and reached the Alabama River a little above. Standing by the water’s edge, the guide whistled, and suddenly a light sprang up amid the dark green foliage of the opposite bank. Soon a boat put out, rowed by a man dressed like the guide, and equally taciturn. The boat had hardly touched the shore before Robert, at a motion from the guide’s hand, leaped in, and the guide himself, with a powerful push, accompanied by a leap that sent him into the bow of the boat, shoved it far out in the stream.

A few seconds and they were across, where a negro held a flaming torch, showing in the background two horses.

“Major Warren,” said the guide, “you will find your horse Don in the woods. You are now free. In the saddle-bags you will find money and instructions; follow them out carefully.”

“How can I thank you? God bless you, more than friend!” said Robert, with un-suppressed emotion, as he extended his hand. The guide took it, and as he covered the grip with his left hand he said:

“We are brothers, not friends. May God lead you to the light.”

Robert shook hands with the man who brought over the boat, receiving the same mystic sign as he said:

“If in your army an opportunity presents itself to aid a brother from our side, do by him as we this

night have done by you." The soldiers turned, entered the boat, and with a few rapid strokes were lost in the darkness that hung over the river.

"Where do you come from, boy?" asked Robert, turning to the negro, who had extinguished the torch.

"I's one ob Mauss Lefranc's boys."

"Do you know who those gentlemen are w't u have just crossed the river?"

"Yes, mauss, de one wat come 'long wid you's Cap'n Loring; de odder's young Mauss Wash. Lefranc."

"Show me Don, my horse." The black boy led him back from the river, where, 'mid a clump of trees, the horses were fastened. A low neigh of recognition from Don, and Robert stood beside him with his arms about the noble animal's neck.

"Don, old boy, this seems like a dream. You old scamp, what made you run the wrong way af er I fell, eh?"

Robert stroked the arched neck and patted the sleek sides as he spoke, while Don rubbed his nose against him, and with affectionate little neighs, intended for a satisfactory explanation, he enjoyed the meeting more than he could express.

The black boy arranged the bridle, and Robert vaulted into the saddle. He was a man again, free, with a good horse beneath him. The stars shone more brightly, and the cool night wind came gratefully to him, and the certain past became a dream and the uncertain future hope made a reality.

"Boy, you are to guide me."

"Yes, mauss, I goes 'long wid yeh t' ll day

"Are you ready?"

"Yes, mauss," said the black boy, mounting and

starting at a brisk trot up the river. Robert longed to let his horse out, and enjoy once more the exhilarating feeling of a gallop on his favorite horse. And Don seemed equally anxious to show his limbs had not lost their ancient fleetness, but he was equally anxious to show his obedience, and sensibly remained behind the heavy, plodding animal which the black guide rode.

Shortly after daylight the black man stopped before a house, and requesting the major to remain outside, he took from his pocket, where it was carefully wrapped, a letter, and entered. In a few minutes a man in slippers and a wrapper appeared, and standing on the gallery called out :

“Dismount, major ; your horse will be cared for. Welcome—you are just in time for breakfast.” This was said as the major approached the gallery, and in the hand greeting that he received he felt the sign that convinced him he was still under the care of brothers. The hospitality was as thoughtful and generous as the refined planter’s ever is. After a good bath and a hearty breakfast, for which the major had a good appetite, the planter told him he must rest till night, when he would send a guide with him to Kingston ; in the meantime he would send back Colonel Lefranc’s boy.

When Robert went to his room, he felt the stiffness resulting from his ride, and was glad to stretch himself on the white, clean bed. He was about sinking into a doze, when he bethought him of the instructions which Captain Loring told him were in his saddle-bags. He anxiously opened the package addressed to himself. The first thing he saw was a

roll of Confederate money, and then a letter. He read the letter, which briefly stated the cause that led to the captain's friendship, and the hope for his successful escape. It said that he could count on friends, and need have no fears till after leaving Kingston, Perry County; then he must use his own judgment. A small map of the Southern States was found in the package, with a route marked down leading to Baton Rouge, and which Robert determined to take, passing next by York and South of Meridian.

He had a most refreshing sleep that day, not waking till Mr. Norton knocked in person at his door, and came to summon him to supper.

About eight o'clock his horse was brought out, and Mr. Norton, giving careful instructions to one of his own men, who was to act as guide, bade the major God-speed.

During his stay with Mr. Norton, that gentleman never once mentioned the war, nor alluded to the fact that the major was a Yankee, escaping to the Union lines to take up arms against him and his friends.

It was eight o'clock next morning before the black boy reined in his horse before a large house, near the Methodist church in the rambling village of Marion.

"Mauss Clark, de brudder, libs heah."

"Whose brudder, boy?"

"My brudder, an your brudder, an' de Lor's."

"Oh, he is a clergyman!—all right."

The black boy entered the house, and Robert dismounted to rest and await him.

An old, venerable-looking man soon made his appearance, and, after warmly greeting the major, whom

he addressed by name, he sent the black boy with the horses to an adjacent livery stable.

“Come in, brother, you need food and rest; thank God, it is in my power to give you both.”

It was a clean, quiet house, with books scattered about, and evidences in furniture and pictures of refined taste and a woman's hand.

Breakfast was soon prepared, and, although Mr. Clark had eaten before, he sat down with his guest, and offered up a blessing, sweet in its charity and kindness, for the food the major was about to enjoy.

The room in which the major slept was cool and airy, and during the day, in a half-conscious way, he heard a low, sweet voice, and listened as in dreams to the soft, quick steps of a woman's feet. He felt better, rested better for it.

He rose about the middle of the afternoon, and found Mr. Clark awaiting him.

“You have a long ride, with much fatigue and danger, before you. Let me hope, brother, that you have rested well. Robert assured him that he had.

“Beyond this, I fear there is no one you can trust; but I would advise you to go out by York. You could, perhaps, reach your people sooner by going north, but the road to you would be dangerous, and the probabilities of a return to captivity strong.”

“I am very thankful, sir, and will take your advice.”

“You must start before dark, so as to reach the Cahawba road. By twelve o'clock to-night you can reach Corsin's Tavern. Your own discretion must be exercised as to your remaining there.”

Mr. Clark then led Robert into the room where he

had breakfasted, and where the table was set for two. Again the good man prayed, and asked God for a speedy peace in a way that to Him would seem just and right for his people and the holy cause of religion.

The adventures of the past few days seemed like a dream to Robert, and he only realized again the cause when, before mounting, he held the good man's hand with the grip of sworn fidelity.

He was now alone, and though the future seemed uncertain, and must be shaped by circumstances, he felt more like a man. He reached the place, which he recognized from Mr. Clark's description as Corsin's Tavern, about eleven o'clock that night. Informing the landlord that he wished to remain for the night, and that his hotel was recommended by Mr. Clark, of Marion, he found the sallow-looking host quite willing to care for him and his horse. The accommodation was not good, but the guest was not particular, and willingly paid the twenty dollars charged him in the morning. In answer to Robert's inquiry, after he had mounted in the morning, Mr. Corsin advised him to keep north of York, and assured him that by a ride of forty-five miles he could reach his brother's place. This brother, he said, was a planter, but since the war "he was in the habit of keerin' for travelin' folk."

Getting the directions carefully, Robert bade the bilious landlord farewell and turned his horse's head west.

He traveled through a country rich in all its natural advantages, but poor in its people and their industries. The section had not been injured by the war, but in

its dilapidated buildings and broken fences and half-tilled fields it looked as if suffering some fearful scourge.

Once or twice Robert lost his way, but he succeeded in finding Corsin's plantation shortly after dark. Giving the black man who took his horse particular instructions as to his care, Robert entered the house. The proprietor was in Meridian, but his wife, a slovenly, aguish-looking woman, with very bad teeth and a protruding chin, aided by a one-armed ex-soldier, had charge of the place. Robert was roomed in an out-building, and as there was nothing to entertain him he retired early.

He was sleeping soundly about midnight, when he became conscious of the presence of some person in his room, and his eyes were affected by a faint light. He turned his head, and there, standing beside him, with a look of wonder and joy on his face was Archy! Quick as a flash the light went out.

“Archy, my boy!”

“Oh, bless de Lor', Mauss Bob!” Archy threw his arm over his master, and sobbed with very joy.

“Oh, de Lor' is good—better'n I, a poor sinner, kin 'spect.”

“How have you been, Archy? Is this man Corsin the fellow that bought you?”

“Yes, Mauss—God forgive him! He's beat me offen, an' I wanted to die, but a thinkin' on you and de pickanninies ——”

“Well, Archy, I have had a rough time. I am now escaping. What time is it?”

“It's de middle ob de night.”

“Did you see Don?”

“Praise de Lor’, yes. Where did he come from?”

“I will tell you all, after awhile. Don is fresh enough to travel.”

“Yes, mauss, reckon he’d keep it up fur a week.”

“Are there any other horses in the stable?”

“Yes, mauss, two.”

“Saddle the best of them, and Don, at once, I will dress; are there any arms about the house?”

“Do n’t know, Mauss.”

“Well, get the black people to see, I will pay them. Be quick and quiet.” As Robert spoke he rose and hurriedly dressed, and Archy passed out.

The work of saddling was short, and as Robert and Archy stood beside their horses an old negro man, barefooted, stole softly from the house.

“Heah, four pistols an’ all de fixens, an’ a rifle.”

“Thank you uncle, some day I will bring you liberty, to pay for this.”

To which the uncle replied, “Lor’ heah de prayer.”

The pistols were loaded, and strapping them on Robert and Archy mounted, the latter carrying the rifle. A quiet ride for a few hundred yards, then, as in days gone past, master and man were on the war-path and free.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE LAST BUT ONE.

It would be a repetition of much that has been said to narrate in detail the incidents and adventures of Warren's escape westward from York with his servant. In itself the story would be a marvel of coolness, daring, and escape; but as a link in the chain of an eventful career, it would be but the additional confirmation of the character Robert Warren has already established in these pages, and in the liberty of his country. Long rides by night, with negro guides; days spent in the woods, with man or master on guard; fears of pursuit, and hopes of the vicinity of friends; detours to the North or South, and retrograde movements when there was danger in the advance; days of hunger and nights of rain, unsheltered, all went to make up the outlines of that escape to Baton Rouge.

It was the middle of the summer of '64, when ragged and half famished, Robert, on the still spirited but emaciated Don, and Archy, on a mule he had borrowed, one early day-light, entered the town of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Major Warren's fame had preceded him, and after the officer in command at Baton Rouge became satisfied as to his identity, he received that cordial welcome which only a soldier can give, particularly if he came from Massachusetts.

Robert learned at Baton Rouge that he was reported killed, and Colonel Fellows showed a number of newspaper eulogies, all speaking in the highest terms of the Union scout, and deploring his untimely death.

Only those who have been captives away from the protection of their own flag can appreciate the feelings of one returning, after what seemed an age, to his own land, made so by the banner under which he fought and not by the geographical position of the place where it floated.

General Banks was acquainted at once with the escape of Warren and ordered him to report at his headquarters, in New Orleans. Before doing so, he sent on to Vicksburg for his effects, the principal things amongst them being the remnants of the old flag torn down from the flagstaff at Braxoria in the March of '61. He wrote to Mary, still working in the hospitals at Nashville, and to Richardson, now fighting with Sherman before the defenses of Atlanta.

Robert learned with regret, at Baton Rouge, of the death of old Dawn, and he remembered, in connection with the date, the death-words of little Ned. We are all superstitious, no matter what creed or belief we hold and the coincidence made an impression on the mind of Warren which only death can efface. Perhaps death will confirm the event by showing the relations existing between the peoples of the seen and unseen worlds.

Ten days at Baton Rouge and Robert Warren, who had entered the place weakened by travel and the want of rest, was ready with his servant to obey the order of General Banks, and report at New Orleans.

He descended the river, the very waters of which

were suggestive to him of former scenes of danger, and exploits as wonderful as those which make romantic the knights of the middle ages. From the day when he crossed it escaping to Kentucky to the night when in the boat he crossed with Rose, the era of startling events was pictured on his mind. He crossed first feeling that right would triumph and that the fragments of the flag he carried in his breast would yet float in triumph over the Court-house from which it was torn. Now, after years of suffering and battle, during which many of those he loved had fallen, and thousands of those with whom he had fought had gone down to soldiers' graves. Now, before Petersburg Grant's legions were digging to unearth treason, and before Atlanta Sherman was maneuvering for victory. Banks had been defeated on the Red River, Sturgis beaten beyond Memphis, Fort Pillow had left its dark mark on the map, and the stories of rebel prisons become facts which his own terrible experience could verify; still the faith remained unshaken, the love of liberty intensified, and the certainty of a triumphant return to Texas became an affair as sure as existence. Once Robert Warren had heard a southern man say, that "if the Confederacy failed, he would lose his faith in a God."

He always thought that if the cause of the nation went down, the cause of God and man would go with it, and he felt that God never permitted His cause to go backward.

John Wharton, had risen to honor and distinction in the Southern army. He was the bravest of the brave, and the truest of the true, to the cause he deemed right. During Warren's imprisonment, as a

favor to himself, and, as it was supposed, for the good of the Confederacy, he was sent beyond the Mississippi, where he was destined to fall by the hands of an assassin, who was warmly enlisted in the Southern cause, and who had that Southern idea of right, which made the wronged the judge of his own case, and the executioner of the penalty his own uncurbed passions might dictate. John Morgan was in Tennessee at that time, it was the limit of his exploits, for he fell by a Union bullet, and his daring became a subject for Southern tradition after that summer of '64. Allen Warren was a colonel with Rousseau, and his cool daring had won the respect of the Army and led to his favorable mention in the reports of a chief unsparing with his praise.

The cause of the Union looked well. Had it appeared darker, it would not have shaken Warren's faith. His case was that of the enlisted minority, through whose faith and valor the war was brought to a successful issue.

New Orleans in '64, apart from the important Union element, was the New Orleans of 1861—treason-loving, negro-worshiping, and devoid of virtue and religion. Cowardly gamblers, old Southern men, and women lost to all sense of decency and right, comprised the major part of a population never noted for its tone of justice, or its adherence to the decalogue. The men who wore the blue in '64 as in '61, and later, were objects of insult and ridicule to persons who lacked the pride to show openly their hate. Butler, coarse and lacking sensibilities, with a strong heart and a cool head, was the proper man for New Orleans; and though now working in the useless

Dutch Gap Canal, the lesson he had taught New Orleans traitors was not forgotten by them under the milder rule of Banks.

The reception Major Warren received at New Orleans compensated him for all his sufferings, and, after a few days' stay, he learned with a feeling of delight that he was to be sent as provost marshal to New Iberia, near which he remembered Mr. Henry, the friend of his sister, lived.

New Iberia, as has before been stated, is situated on the Bayou Teche, a few hours' ride from Berwick's Bay. Around it is the heart of Louisiana, in wealth and culture, the largest slave interest, and the strongest Southern feeling.

The position of Major Warren was anything but pleasant. Daily, for the first two weeks, he was beset by men whose slaves had run away, and who claimed, in order to have them recovered, to be Union men, and by persons who were continually complaining against the asserted robberies of Union soldiers.

One day a gentleman sent in his card, marked "important," and signed "Henry." It did not take long for the gentleman to gain an audience. An orderly brought him into the major's office.

"Mr. Henry, I believe this is your card?"

"Yes, sir, I wished to see you privately."

"I can speak with you privately here, sir. Sergeant, clear the office."

The sergeant did clear the office, and Major Warren, half surmising who the man was, pointed Mr. Henry to a chair.

"Excuse me, Major Warren, but I heard of the arrival of a person of your name in New Iberia. I own

property near here, but, for the last two years, I have been living in Algiers, opposite New Orleans. A lady who supposes you to be her son is now stopping at my house."

"What! Where did the lady come from?"

"She came from Gonzelletta, Texas, and is the widow of Robert Warren, senior."

"And the mother of Robert Warren, junior! I am her son."

Robert shook the hand of Mr. Henry, warmly, and added, as he drew his chair near that gentleman's:

"Are you the friend of Mary Warren—the gentleman who accompanied her from Texas, and saw her safely off for Vicksburg?"

"I did accompany the young lady as you describe, and I am convinced she is your sister; but I have more important information for you than that, for it has become a matter of the past."

"To what do you refer?"

"Well, major, I have now under my roof three ladies in whom you are interested. One of them is your mother, the other two are Mrs. Boardman and her daughter Amy. I presume you know the latter lady?"

"Indeed I do, Mr. Henry; and I am glad to know they are in the care of a man so good and true as I know you to be. I learned that Mrs. Boardman had suffered by the confiscation of her property, but I could not learn, heretofore, what had become of them."

"The coincidence was strange. I learned your mother's condition, and that of Mrs. Boardman and Miss Amy, from your sister, and I was prepared for what followed, though I did not expect to be the instrument of help to them."

“I am deeply interested in this matter, Mr. Henry; please relate it. For more than two years, since my sister left Texas, I have been in total ignorance of the condition of my mother and of Mrs. Boardman and her daughter, to whom, you may have learned, I am engaged.”

“It was to tell you of this that I came on from Algiers. Once, major, my plantation was the finest on the Teche. I had scores of hands and hundreds of cattle, and was considered wealthy. To-day I am poor. General Banks, on the side of the Union, and Dick Taylor, on the side of the rebels, have carried off negroes and cattle. In a fight, that occurred last year, my dwelling and sugar-house were burned down to make room for Taylor’s artillery, and the slaves that he did not carry off attached themselves to the pursuing army of Banks. I was fortunate in having some property in New Orleans, which enables me to live in a quiet way for the present; but so small have been my losses and sufferings compared with yours, that I feel ashamed for having mentioned them in your presence.”

“God bless you, Mr. Henry! It does me good to meet such a man, and it strengthens my faith as to the result of this terrible war; but tell me about my mother and the rest of my friends in your care.”

“Excuse me, major, I ought to have done so at once, but somehow self will crop out, and the subject daily nearest to the heart is the one most apt to engage our attention. Your time is fully occupied, so I will not detain you, except by a brief sketch of affairs in which I know you are as much interested as myself.”

“You interest me by the recital of your own affairs.

They are so closely blended with mine that every word interests me."

"You are as kind as I expected, major. Let me say I was deeply interested in your sister, and was known, I think, as a Union man in this part of the State. In '62, or rather the latter part of that year, there was quite an exodus of Union people from Texas. They sought out my house instinctively, and I think I can say with truth they always found in me a friend. I expected your mother. Indeed, I looked for Mrs. Boardman and Miss Amy, and perhaps Cooper Johnson and Mr. Bell. I knew all about the Union people in your part of Texas, and when your immediate friends reached me I was glad to know that the wife and mother of your friend Gaines were permitted to remain. You, of course, know about that infamous confiscation act, and the vile 'Receivers,' as they are called, who were appointed by the Southern government. Under that order, or act, I have forgotten which it was, your mother lost her property, and subsequently Mrs. Boardman was turned out of her place, a man named Church purchasing the property when it was put up for sale. The three ladies started east, hardly knowing their destination, and they reached New Iberia destitute and without friends. There were others besides myself true to the Union. Mr. Tabard, a French gentleman, acquainted me with the arrival of your friends, and I can assure you I was not slow in finding them out. It was impossible for them to go North at the time, and I was more than glad to be able to offer them my protection. Since then they have been living with me, sharing my privations and waiting with me for the end."

Mr. Henry ceased, and Robert grasped his hand.

“I cannot thank you, my friend. Those whom you have aided are dear to me as life; without them I would not ask to live beyond the restoration of my country. Where is Amy, now; where is my mother?”

“They are all in Algiers.”

“I wish I had known that before. I was for ten days in New Orleans. I might have been with you all the time.”

Mr. Henry handed the major a letter as he ceased speaking. On opening it, it proved to be an order from General Banks directing him to turn over his office to Colonel Whiting and report at once to him at New Orleans.

That night Colonel Whiting was provost marshal of New Iberia, and Major Warren, in company with Mr. Henry, was en route to Berwick's Bay, where they expected to find the boat en route to New Orleans.

CHAPTER XLIV.

GONZELLETTA.

It was October, 1865. The weather was soft and balmy, and the green woods, and yellow plains, and white cotton fields, about Gonzelletta made a tropical picture, of which the eye did not soon weary. The cattle, sleek and fat from the summer's pasturage, covered the prairies, and the cotton pickers' songs, with chorus and laughter, came from the fields about. As when our story began, Mrs. Boardman and her daughter were sitting in the wide gallery. The mother, with a look of calm contentment on her matronly face, marked by a few more fine lines about the eyes and mouth than when first we saw her. Amy, the same bright, impulsive girl, a little more dignified in her bearing and more womanly in her full development.

"Mother, they ought to have been here three days ago. If they do not arrive this afternoon I shall be alarmed. I think it's not kind in Robert, to be so positive about the day he would get back, when he must know how a disappointment would annoy me."

Amy's lip trembled as she spoke.

"My dear child, I fear your experience has not taught you patience. There is some good reason for Robert's not coming. You know his mother was not strong when he took her away; and then he wished

to arrange fully in Washington about this place and his own, which the rebels had confiscated."

Mrs. Boardman stopped, attracted by the approach of a number of soldiers, accompanied by an officer. A short distance from the house the officer permitted his men to rest under the fig trees and walked toward the gallery.

"Welcome, Captain Chamberlain; any news from the San Bernard?"

Captain Chamberlain, a handsome young man with an empty sleeve, saluted the ladies with a cordiality that bespoke an intimate acquaintance and, sitting down, said:

"The people on the San Bernard are gradually cooling down. It does n't pay to insult United States soldiers. Ever since we sent old Gamble away from these pleasant quarters the rebels keep their thoughts to themselves. By the way, what has become of the Townsend family? I have lost sight of them since they left the Warren plantation."

"I think they went West," said Mrs. Boardman. "Mr. Townsend sold all his property in order to secure the Warren plantation. Of course, the title to the purchaser of his own property was good. Unfortunately for him, the 'Confedoracy,' as they call it, could not give as secure a title to his avaricious acquisitions, and he is to-day a poor man, wherever he is."

"The reason I asked about Townsend," said the captain, "is that a son of his, who had been in the Texas Rangers, returned to Brazoria this morning. He was led by a black boy named Tom. I think the boy told me his name was Tom Boardman."

"Why, that 's my Tom," said Amy quickly. "That 's the boy I gave Mary Warren when she went North during the war. Now I remember, Henderson Townsend was present when Mary was arrested, and Robert—I mean Colonel Warren—told me he thought Townsend had him."

"Did I understand you to say that the boy led this man?" asked Mrs. Boardman.

"Yes; Townsend is completely blind, though one would hardly think so to look at his eyes. I spoke to him, and he told me that he left the Rangers in '64, and that the explosion of a shell near Nashville had deprived him forever of sight."

Amy held down her head as she said, in a low, distinct voice:

"God's ways are past our finding out. Nearly five years ago that man, vain and weak and boastful, sat where you now sit, captain; and when I told him the flag of the Union would yet float from the courthouse from which men like him in feeling, but better in heart, had torn it he said: '*So help me God, these eyes will be blasted before they rest on Bob Warren here.*' They never will; but, thank God, Robert Warren lives and the flag floats there."

So deeply were all interested in what Amy was saying that they did not notice Gaines till he had dismounted and was fastening his horse near the house. He approached, walking with a perceptible lameness, the effect of a wound received on Sherman's march. He was accompanied by a poorly-dressed young black man, who bore a striking resemblance to Mary's body-guard. His identity was soon confirmed, for before Captain Gaines had reached

the gallery a black woman rushed from one of the outbuildings with hysterical cries of—

“Tommy! Oh my Tommy, whar did yeh cum from, bless de Lor’, Tommy.”

Had Tommy any religious thoughts about “blessing de Lor’” his ability to give any outward manifestation of the fact was curtailed by the black arms about him and the whole-soul kisses that were lavishly poured on his hungry black face. He found time between the woman’s rude terms of endearment to ask :

“Mammy is dat you?” not that he had the slightest doubt of the fact, but like all great travelers he did want to appear embarrassed. On being assured by the maternal lips of her relationship, Tommy extricated himself, and, placing his hands over the place supposed to be occupied by organs of digestion, he said ;

“Oh, golly, but I’se hungry.” This salutation was greeted with laughter by the party on the gallery, and Tommy bowing awkwardly to his former mistress precipitately retreated toward the kitchen with his delighted mammy.

“I found that boy in Brazoria ” said Gaines laughing, and I fed him till I really had fears for his life, but the poor fellow has evidently starved a great deal.

“Did you see Townsend,” asked Captain Chamberlain.

“Yes, and a more miserable wretch I trust I may never see again. Some of our soldiers in the village gave him clothes, blue Yankee clothes, poor devil, all colors are alike to him now. We raised a collection for him and will send him West when we learn where his father is.”

“How is your family, captain? I heard your mother was not well,” said Mrs. Boardman.

“I never saw my wife looking better. She says she never felt better. My boy nas gotten over his strangeness and accepts the situation. He says he loves me, but would like me better if I had no beard like his grandma. I think my mother is stronger, though subject to those nervous attacks brought on by her anxiety while I was away. I came over to pay my respects, and bring you that poor black, but above all to see Miss Mary Warren and the Colonel, with his mother. He wrote me he would be here for certain to-day.”

“If Robert does n’t come this afternoon, I shall be more provoked with him than I can express,” said Amy pettishly, Captain Gaines laughed.

“Miss Amy you must n’t give up now. I have a distinct recollection of the colonel’s leaving here one stormy night in March, ’61, and though you did not see him for nearly four years, I think I am safe in saying you never got provoked with him.”

“Why to be sure not, I made a viture of a necessity, but, Captain Gaines, every body knows the wedding is to be one week from to-day and Mary is bringing my trosseau with her, I cannot prepare in time if he does not come. However, I will not lose heart till the carriage returns from Columbia.” After a few minutes spent in general conversation the two gentlemen rose to go, Captain Chamberlain to visit the guard stationed on the Warren plantation, and Gaines to ride up the river, promising as he left to return early on the morrow.

Tom was sent for after the visitors departed, and

before he got through with his disjointed, and very amusing, narration of his adventures since he had left Gonzelletta, the sun was hanging from over the wooded line of the San Bernard, and flooding the prairie beyond, and the groves of live oak in the direction of the Brazos. Amy had been watching anxiously, her eyes roaming over the brown, winding road that was lost to sight about a half a mile from the house. Suddenly she bounded from her chair, as a cloud of dust rose in the distant grove through which the road ran. "There is the carriage!" she exclaimed, "Oh, they have come, mother, they have come!" and she bounded down the avenue of magnolia trees. The occupants of the carriage saw her, and waved their handkerchiefs in token of recognition. The driver urged forward the horses, and drew up as he neared Amy, who had been followed at a more deliberate pace by her mother. The door of the carriage opened, their was a cry of delight as a slender girlish form quickly descended and Mary and Amy were clasped in each other's arms. There was a kissing and hand-shaking, and little joyful sobs all round, excepting the very pleasant part which Robert performed, and the carriage went on and the party walked back to the house, the girls with encircling arms and Robert between the elder ladies.

"Oh Robert, if you had not returned to-day I would have been fearfully angry."

"And I fearfully disappointed," said Robert, as he ascended the steps and bent his bronzed face till his bearded cheek rested against the glowing one of the now beautiful girl. "After awhile I will tell you the cause of our delay and then you will be glad that I

was detained over one boat. No, I can't tell you now; here comes Archy, I want to speak with him."

The ladies entered the house, and Archy's tall form was seen in the twilight, approaching with his sweeping stride through the grove. By his side walked, or rather ran, a bright bare-headed black boy about eight years of age.

"Hello, Archy!" was Robert's greeting. "Glad to see you my boy," grasping the strong, ever-faithful black hand.

"Clar' to goodness, Mauss Robut, I'se been awful lonely since yeh lef' two months ago. 'Pears like years."

"Why Archy, I never imagined you would miss me, now you are home again all safe with Susey and the young ones. How are they?"

"Neber better, praise de Lor'! Heah's one ob de pickaninnies. Dis is Bob. Called 'im arter you. Fore heaben, Mauss Robut, dem ar young uns gib me a heap o' trubble durin' de war. Howsomdever, it's all nicer now wen its ober. Whar's Mauss Tennessee, thought he was a comin'."

"He will be here in a few days, Archy, with Major Richardson. His wife was not able to travel or he would have come on with me. I left him in New Orleans."

"Oh, golly, but Susey'll be glad to see dem men. I'se tole her so much about 'em, she's nigh crazy to see 'em. Gosh, dar she is now!" As Archy turned at the familiar steps, Susey appeared on the gallery, leading the other pickaninny, a little girl.

"Fore heben, I's glad to see yeh agin, Mauss Robut, an' yeh aint agwine away no more, an' yeh's

all a comin' back to de ole home; an' whar's Miss Mary? Tell, please."

Susey poured this out breathlessly, as she pressed her young master's hand.

"Here, Susey, here I am!" called out Mary from the house.

A cry of joy from the black woman, and leaving the child on the gallery, she rushed in and threw her arms about the slender form of the young mistress, and sobbed out, "Praise de Lor'! Oh, gib thanks. Oh my darlin' my own little miss! My own purty little girl. Bress God, yeh's back! safe back, safe back," and Susey's heart, too full of affection for expression in words, overflowed in tears, which she poured on the small white hands so many brave men had blessed.

"Yes, home, thank God, Susey! Home with you all whom I love," and the contagion of tears spread to her own eyes and those of Amy by her side. Archy came in and bowed over the little hand which he held, and rising applied the new bandana to his eyes, and said in a low voice :

"I've seen right smart trubble, Mauss Bob, without wettin' my eyes, but clar to Massy I's so happy I can't help it. It's de bread we cas' on de waters long ago, a returnin', some ten, some a hundred fole."

It would be hard to imagine a pleasanter reunion than that which gathered about Mrs. Boardman's supper table that evening. Susey, to her great delight, was permitted to remain and devote herself to the plate of her young mistress, while she listened in wonder to the narration of her adventures, leaving Texas, and the story of her labors in the hospital at Nashville.

Mrs. Warren looked the happiness she felt, as she gazed on the faces of her dear ones and contrasted the joyful present with the gloomy past. After supper there was a clattering of heavy feet outside and black faces peered through the windows "to see Mauss Bob, an' de young miss, agin," and "Mauss Bob, an' de young miss," learning that the people were over from the old home to see them, went out on the gallery, where a cheer greeted them, and suddenly a hundred torches were lit about the house, and in the magnolia grove, each carried by a happy freeman, who, until the war, never knew he was a slave.

After the black people had feasted their eyes, and sang and shouted themselves hoarse, at Robert's request, they quietly retired, and the white people reentered the parlor.

"Robert, you promised to tell me the cause of your detention," said Amy, as she took a seat beside him and laid one hand lovingly on his broad shoulder. "I am dying with curiosity to know."

"Well, my dear little girl, rather than let your curiosity keep you in a condition which might result dangerously to my happiness, I will tell you. You have heard me speak about Major Richardson?"

"Very often; and I am longing to see and love him." She looked archly at Mary, and Mary blushed and cast down her eyes.

"Never mind about loving him. If I did not object, Mary would, and I fear your affection would bring trouble to the camp." He would have gone on, but Amy, with a coquettish little scream, placed her hand over his mouth and said he was "awfully wicked to put such a construction on her words."

“I am going to tell you that Major Richardson, who had left me the day we were to have started from Washington, telegraphed from Philadelphia not to leave that night, as he would return by the next train to see me. We waited and lost the connection, keeping us back three days. The major had intended coming on in January, to be married (Mary dropped her head still lower), but I presume he realized fully his destitute and entirely desolate condition by the time he reached Philadelphia. When he returned he got the little nurse to consent, with the dear mother’s approval and big brother’s essential sanction that the wedding should take place here, on the same day and hour that the little affair in which you and I are interested comes off.”

“Oh, I am so glad you waited,” and the impulsive girl sprang to Mary’s side and raised the burning face, and kissed it again and again with a torrent of endearing names.

“I did not tell you all, however. My cousin, Colonel Allen Warren, is to come on with him, and your friends—indeed, all our friends, Mr. Henry and Louisa—will be here by the same steamer.”

“Oh, thank you, thank you, Robert! It was very selfish and thoughtless in me to complain. I will never, never be thoughtless again. I ought to have known you would all be here but for some good reason.”

It was the day before that set apart for the wedding, a beautiful, balmy day, with just enough wind coming from the gulf to vibrate the halyards pendent from the flagstaff on the court house at Brazoria. A number of horses were fastened to the rack before the

tavern door, and a half dozen carriages were gathered in the adjoining sheds. The troops in blue that walked the streets appeared more smartly dressed than usual, with bright belt and shining side-arms, while near the glistening stacks of muskets in the court-house yard an armed guard paced, and groups of soldiers in full dress reclined on the yellow sward. The streets were crowded with black men in holiday attire, while here and there a bearded face, from beneath a slouched hat, looked jealously on the scene.

In the same room where on that fearful day of '61 a little band of Union men had gathered, there was another and a larger group about the table, and one black, wearing the blue, in their midst.

"My friends, although mustered out of service months ago, as were you, Richardson, and Gaines, and Colonel Allen Warren, Tennessee, and, I might add, Archy, I think it is eminently proper that on this occasion we should appear in the same harness which we wore while struggling to bring this flag back to the Brazos." Robert pointed to a flag on the table as he spoke, and addressed his remarks to a number of United States officers.

His speech was applauded by the officers, and Captain Chamberlain raised his arm so eloquent of his valor as he said:

"You have won the right to wear it. Thank God, Texas has some redeeming features."

"You will notice, my friends, on this blue field I have sewed, with my own hand, a number of tatters of the old flag. Some of you know the history of what, to an ordinary observer, would seem rags. They are the remnants of the flag which floated over yon-

der court-house before the secession of '61. I saw that flag hauled down, torn to tatters, and trampled in the dust; and, when the infuriated crowd dispersed, I picked these soiled tatters from the dirt; and here, in this room, a little band of us swore never to rest till the flag came back to the Brazos. Of the men who raised their hands to Heaven that day with me, there is but one left. (Laying his hand on the captain's shoulder.) My brother-in-arms, and my devoted friend in peril—the gallant Andrew Gaines. I will not tire you, my friends, with a history of our trials, or the still sadder narration of the sufferings of the dear ones we left behind. I carried those tatters with me to Kentucky. They were in my breast at Somerset, Donelson, and Shiloh. A rebel bullet pierced them—see this star!—before it entered the lung, where now it is lodged. I had them with me at Vicksburg; but fortunately they were left in my trunk a few days before my capture. When I was stationed at New Orleans, where I spent the last eight months of my service, I had them sent down to me at once. I would have obeyed my first impulse at the close of the war by giving them to the free winds at once, when there were soldiers here to defend them; but I remembered Gaines, and Tennessee, and Richardson, and my noble cousin, and others whose faith was as strong, and whose efforts were greater than mine, and I decided that they should share my triumph. Of the men who hauled down the flag, but few are left. The noblest and bravest, John Wharton, was murdered by one of his own confederates. Addison, a noble misguided lad, sleeps at Johnson's Island, where he died a prisoner in our hands.

Bently, a gallant man, noble in his impulses, but wrong in their direction, lies on the banks of White Oak River, in Tennessee. Others sleep on many battle-fields; a few wounded survivors, and others, homeless and friendless, are left. God knows I would and will do all I can to make them happy under the flag they did so much to ruin.

Excuse me, my friends, I did not intend making a speech; but my heart is full of the memories of the past, and with the pleasant surroundings of the present. Let us throw up this flag, and to-morrow evening we will meet again at Gonzelletta."

"The kernel's head wuz allers level. I'll say that fur him, even though I knows he's agoin ter git married. I allers feared thar was suthin of that kind wrong with him. Dogon'd, boys, if I aint glad ter be heah. I've suffered right smart myself. My father, brothers, and, wus than all, my little ones were taken; but the ole woman's left, and, down heah on the Brazos, we're agoin to live an' take a fresh start. I don't feel sorry that I took a han', friends, not by a darned sight. I've had my share of consolations with it all."

The officers descended the stairs after they had severally grasped the hand of the brave Tennessee. Outside they formed in order, Robert, Gaines, and Archy in the advance. The bugle sounded, the soldiers fell in and seized their arms, and, as the three men entered the court-house with the flag, the officer in command gave the ringing order, "present arms!"

A few minutes, and the flag was fast to the hal-yards, and, mid ringing cheers, it rose and streamed out, brighter and fairer, and freer than ever before, and every man gazing up at its folds shared equally

in its protection, and looked to Heaven free. The tatters spake of its ancient glory. The shame and the disgrace were torn from it by traitors' hands, to be kept separated from it by loyal ones forever.

A shabbily-dressed man, leaning on the shoulder of a grey-clad comrade outside the yard said :

“Taylor, what's all the shoutin for?”

“Bob Warren has raised the flag.”

“I will never see it again.” Henderson Townsend pressed his brown hand to his sightless eyes.

There were women present, whose hearts overflowed at the scenes they had witnessed, and Mr. Henry, who, as a non-military man, remained with them, vowed it was the happiest day of his life. And when the officers gathered about the carriages, he told them they had committed a great oversight in not asking the bravest soldier of all, Mary Warren, to participate in the ceremonies.

“Yes, the bravest and the best, would the world were like her,” said Richardson, as he looked fondly on the flushed face of the noble girl.

There was a grand gathering at Gonzelletta next day, officers in uniform and grooms in full dress, soldiers from the surrounding stations and gaudily dressed negroes from both plantations. A chaplain had come on from New Orleans to perform the ceremony, and Tennessee's wife told Mrs. Gaines she “really never seed anything so awful fine in her life, nor gals so purty as the two agoin' ter be hitched,” adding as she noticed Colonel Allen Warren and Louisa Henry much interested in each other at the end of the gallery, “Should n't wonder a bit if them 'ar two would go nex'. They kinder strikes me that way.”

And Mrs. Gaines, resting her hand on the head of her bright boy, said she "would not be at all surprised."

It would no doubt interest many of our readers to give a detailed account of the wedding and the dresses, and how the brides behaved, and how the grooms conducted themselves. All passed off happily, and the day was one of festivity and joy as Gonzelletta had never before seen.

A few days after the wedding, for the young married people did not run off on a foolish bridal tour as if ashamed of what they had done, Richardson said to Robert:

"Mary will not want to leave here. I have, as you know, sold my property in Tennessee, and we have decided to settle permanently in Gonzelletta."

"Why, of course, I never dreamed of you going away. Mary has some ten thousand acres along the river. Mr. Henry has made up his mind to come here in a few months, and now that my uncle is dead and Bell married, I am sure Cousin Allen will come down and add to our settlement. I am the more assured of this as he and Miss Henry seem more devoted than I ever saw people on the same acquaintance."

It is 1870, and Texas, though rent by dissensions and disgraced by lawlessness for five years, has one place where there is peace and prosperity, because it is the abode of loyalty and intelligence—Gonzelletta, the home of Warren of Texas.



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